COMMON

Ground

PRESERVING OUR NATION'S HERITAGE FALL 2006

PITTSBURGH IN THE fifties

FROM URBAN RENEWAL TO POST-INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE

FIRST WORD

Model Stewardship

BY RICHARD MOE

ONE WEEKEND RECENTLY I FOUND MYSELF AT Shelburne Farms, near Burlington, Vermont—a very nice place to spend a summer day. Established in the late 19th century as the country home of William Seward Webb and his wife Lila Vanderbilt, the farm eventually encompassed 3,800 acres and won fame as a model agricultural enterprise, demonstrating innovative land-use practices and breeding prize horses. More than a century later, Shelburne Farms is still a busy and productive place. The sprawling main house is now a marvelously comfortable inn. Handsome barns and other outbuildings, most of them beautifully restored, house a wide range of educational programs that aim to instill a conservation ethic in students, educators, and the general public. Still in agricultural use, the land is protected by conservation easements, and the buildings and landscape (much of which was laid out under the guidance of Frederick Law Olmsted) constitute a national historic landmark district, designated in 2001. **LOOKING OUT OVER THE SERENE** and tidy Vermont vista of hills, fields, and trees, I could hardly have been farther removed from another place where I've spent a good deal of time recently: the devastated streets of New Orleans. A full year after Hurricane Katrina roared ashore and the levees gave way, parts of the Crescent City are anything but "serene and tidy." To be sure, the leafy streets of the Garden District and the galleried blocks of the French Quarter look much as they did pre-Katrina, but in off-the-tourist-track historic districts such as Holy Cross and South Lakeview, residents are still struggling to put their homes and lives back together. Most of the bungalows, creole cottages, shotgun houses, and corner stores are not the sort that get full-color coverage in guidebooks and coffee-table volumes, but they are the real warp and weft of the architectural fabric. Equally important, they are home to people who love them and are working hard—with the help of local and national preservation groups and volunteers from all over the country—to make them livable again. **WHILE SHELBURNE FARMS AND NEW ORLEANS** might appear to have little in common, they're linked in a couple of significant ways. To begin with, both are essential to our understanding of who we are. How we lived; what we knew and believed and hoped for; how we shaped, and were shaped by, our environment—these and other pieces of our national identity are embodied in the imposing barns of Vermont and the modest dwellings of New Orleans. They represent the wildly diverse *pluribus* out of which we're constantly struggling to create *unum,* and that makes them important chapters in the story of us. **IN ADDITION, BOTH PLACES OFFER** a compelling snapshot of preservation. They echo a sentiment expressed with quiet eloquence in *With Heritage So Rich,* the document that laid the foundation for the National Historic Preservation Act, whose 40th anniversary we commemorate this year: "If the preservation movement is to be successful . . . it must go beyond saving occasional historic houses and opening museums . . . It must do more than revere a few precious national shrines. It must attempt to give a sense of orientation to our society using structures and objects of the past to establish values of time and place." That statement reminds us that preservation really matters when it enables the past to play a vital role in the life of the present. **A CENTURY AGO, WILLIAM AND LILA WEBB** took enormous pride in Shelburne Farms as a model of stewardship of the land. Their spirit is still alive today, and so is the farm. The place would make a great museum, I'm sure—but it works even better as a living venue for teaching people about conservation. **IN THE SAME SENSE,** the historic districts of New Orleans would make a fascinating open-air museum of architecture—but that's not what they're meant to be. These houses have sheltered and shaped generations of residents, most of whom just want to go home again. They want their neighborhoods to be what they once were: familiar and alive. **FORTUNATELY, SOMEONE CARED ENOUGH** to keep Shelburne Farms intact and vibrant. The historic districts of New Orleans deserve the same kind of care. In Louisiana and Vermont and everywhere else, we need to keep our past—the mansions and the shotgun houses, the barns and the mills, the schools and the movie palaces—close at hand and full of life.

"THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS OF NEW ORLEANS WOULD MAKE A FASCINATING OPEN-AIR MUSEUM OF ARCHITECTURE—BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT THEY'RE MEANT TO BE. THESE HOUSES HAVE SHELTERED AND SHAPED GENERATIONS OF RESIDENTS, MOST OF WHOM JUST WANT TO GO HOME AGAIN."

Richard Moe is President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

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Above: Blue Duesenberg in an original showroom, a national historic landmark and part of Indiana's Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum.

Cover: Workman clearing the site for Pittsburgh's new Gateway Center, September 1950.

ELLIOTT ERWITT/CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF PITTSBURGH

NEWS CLOSEUP

WINDOW ON GENIUS

REHAB OF EDISON SITES BEARS FRUIT AS ESTATE REOPENS TO VISITORS

His name is synonymous with ingenuity, recalling a time when the nation emerged as the worldwide leader in a golden age of technology. Thomas Edison, one of history's most prolific inventors, did much of his work at his laboratory in West Orange, New Jersey. Today it is preserved—along with his home, Glenmont—as a national historic site.

While the complex of industrial brick buildings doesn't appear much different from others of the era, Edison's facility, sometimes referred to as "the Invention Factory," was a remarkable place indeed. It was here that the inventor's fertile imagination met the practical world, and where devices he visualized became reality.

A multiyear effort to rehabilitate the once-neglected site, making it more accessible to the public, is bearing fruit as the Edison estate recently re-opened for visitation. Great strides have been made in the laboratory buildings as well, where work is continuing. The project, started in 2003, is a partnership between the National Park Service and the nonprofit Thomas A. Edison Preservation Foundation. GE, a descendant of Edison's original electric lighting business, donated $5 million; a pair of grants totaling $500,000 from the NPS-administered Save America's Treasures program went toward improving storage conditions for the park's enormous collection of documents and artifacts. Restoring the 21-acre site is expected to cost over $12 million. Lack of funds, age, and water and insect damage all contributed to earn Edison's home and laboratories a place on the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of most endangered places.

Far Left: **Building 11, Edison's place for experiments and special projects.** Left center: **The inventor with an early version of the phonograph.**

Thomas Edison moved to West Orange in 1886. Glenmont, his 29-room Queen Anne mansion, was a wedding gift to his new bride, Mina. It was located in one of the first planned residential communities. Edison's laboratory complex, which was less than a mile away from his house, was finished the following year. It was convenient to rail service and Hudson River traffic, and perhaps most importantly, just an hour away from the offices of the New York bankers and investors who would finance his work.

The Edison laboratories, originally comprised of five one-story buildings, housed a machine shop, a library, experiment rooms, and individual chemistry, physics, and metallurgy labs (at the park, they are collectively referred to as "the lab"). Edison submitted freely to his wide-ranging curiosity and imagination. The only requirement he imposed on research was that it had to have practical, marketable value. "I always invented to obtain money to go on inventing," he says in Matthew Josephson's *Edison: A Biography*.

His approach was to bring an idea to specialists to develop a prototype and work the bugs out. Once performing flawlessly, it was turned over to the factory part of the complex for production. Edison employed over 200 scientists, machinists, craftsmen, and laborers, who he divided into small teams, all working simultaneously on the same idea. Once a device was done, Edison quickly patented it. All the resources for manufacture were present on site. In fact, much of the factory machinery was conceived and created in the Edison labs. He turned out products at an unprecedented rate. Out of West Orange came the motion picture camera, the phonograph, sound recordings, movies, the alkaline battery, and a diagnostic tool known as the fluoroscope, predecessor of the X-Ray.

The diversity of the work helped keep the business afloat. It saved Edison from having to rely on a limited number of products. Older, proven ideas funded more innovation. Perfecting the alkaline battery was trying and expensive, kept alive by proceeds from the phonograph. Edison's fusion of business and technology was an early model for modern research and development. The formula

Right: **Glenmont, Edison's New Jersey home.**

ALL PHOTOS THOMAS EDISON NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

would be improved upon and used with increasing frequency as America rose to its place as the undisputed leader in technological innovation.

AT ITS PEAK, THE MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS OCCUPIED 21 ACRES OFF Main Street in West Orange. It was an enduring local presence, with generations following each other to work in the big brick buildings. In the end, however, progress outstripped even Edison. He couldn't "keep up with the modern world he had helped to create," says a National Park Service history. By 1930, the place was no longer a hotbed of innovation. Only seven people worked in the labs. The factory still turned out batteries and dictating machines, but the glory days were gone. Edison's son Charles sold the company to McGraw Electric in 1959. McGraw continued some manufacturing in West Orange, but by the early '70s, it had moved to the Midwest, and the corporate presence was just a memory. By that time, the house and lab were in the possession of the National Park Service, which, while much of Edison's West Orange disappeared in the wake of urban renewal, set about trying to preserve the legacy.

EDISON EMPLOYED OVER 200 SCIENTISTS, MACHINISTS, CRAFTSMEN, AND LABORERS, WHO HE DIVIDED INTO SMALL TEAMS, ALL WORKING SIMULTANEOUSLY ON THE SAME IDEA. ONCE A DEVICE WAS DONE, EDISON QUICKLY PATENTED IT. ALL THE RESOURCES FOR MANUFACTURE WERE PRESENT ON SITE.

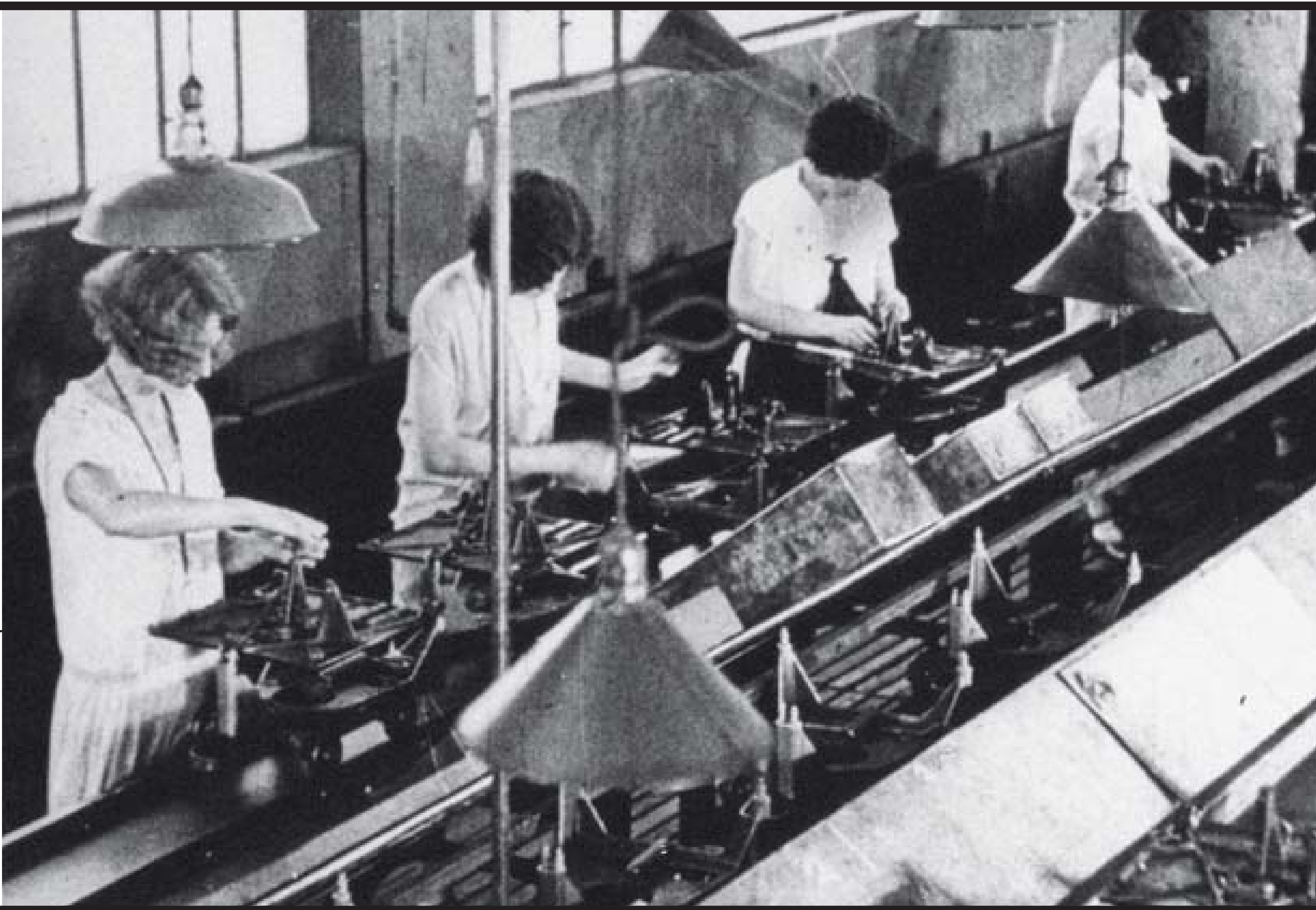
Above: **Inventions forever linked with Edison's name: the phonograph and the light bulb.**

In 44 years at the West Orange labs, Edison earned an esteemed place in the history of technology. Of his 1,093 patents, about half were developed there. While the National Park Service naturally celebrated the Edison phenomenon, it was evident that it carried a profound social impact as well.

To investigate the human dimension to the story, the National Park Service contracted an ethnographic study of former employees and their descendants. In field interviews, the company's pervasive presence was clear. Many locals worked there, in some cases entire families. "[Edison] wanted to keep the families," says one respondent who followed his father into the factories. "They went through the plants and said, 'If you have any brothers or sisters, ask them to come in for an interview.'" Today, while local leaders see economic advantage in heritage tourism, some residents view the history differently. When Edison departed, the "carefully crafted family image" departed with him, says NPS ethnographer Rebecca Joseph. Adds Mike Agar, who led the study, "From the viewpoint of the town, it wasn't a museum. It was a closed factory." Residents saw the park as a reminder of abandonment by the McGraw Company, which moved the operation out. Agar says, "It went from being a patriarchal organization—with all the good and bad that entails—to more of a formal kind of labor-management antagonistic entity."

TODAY, AS THE REHAB MOVES FORWARD, THE PARK SEEKS TO TELL ALL SIDES of the story. The most immediate issue, however, was protecting Glenmont from fire, says Superintendent Maryanne Gerbauckas. Fire officials estimated the old house could burn down in a little over 10 minutes. "Now we have fire detection and suppression for the first time," she says. Glenmont also got an updated electrical system; the greenhouse, potting shed, and barn have been rehabbed, too. Another aspect of the renovation is the return of Building 11. The small structure, a simple wood frame building unlike others in the complex, was where Edison called quick meetings with his engineers and scientists—"muckers," as he called them—or when a sudden project came up that needed room for experiment. Building 11 was disassembled in 1940 and shipped to the Henry Ford Museum in Michigan, where it sat unused until recently. The park and its partners got the building back, and it's now very close to its original home among the brick edifices.

The greater part of the work to be done is in the laboratory, much of it for climate control. Leaking roofs, deteriorating mortar, poor drainage, and the generally wet environment of old masonry buildings make for a major rehab job. The park holds more than 400,000



Above: Sometimes father and mother, sister and brother worked for the Edison company, whose family image departed when its corporate descendant moved the operation out.

artifacts and 5 million pages of paper, including Edison's letters and lab notes. There are early phonographs and sound recordings, radios, motion picture projectors, lighting equipment, prototype batteries, telephones, and assorted spare parts. The previously inaccessible third floor will become exhibit space with floor-to-ceiling displays. The phonograph collection has its own HVAC system and special lighting.

"The best thing about this is the access," says Gerbauckas. Since the park was established, tours were restricted to the first floor. She recalls early tours where guides would indicate inaccessible areas, remarking that although fascinating things were kept there, they unfortunately could not be seen. A new elevator will take visitors where they can more fully experience the Invention Factory. "That means a great deal to us," Gerbauckas says.

For more information, visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/edis or email Superintendent Maryanne Gerbauckas at maryanne_gerbauckas@nps.gov. The park is the focus of a lesson plan—part of the Teaching with Historic Places series produced by the National Park Service—which can be used to teach students about industrialization, the development of science and technology, and social change at the beginning of the 20th century. Go to ww.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/25edison/5edison.htm.

OBJECTS OF LIFE

WEB EXHIBIT CHRONICLES THE STORIED PAST OF THE NEZ PERCE

For thousands of years, in the vast open spaces of the Northwest, among its rivers, mountains, and valleys, the Nez Perce lived freely. Today, the tribe's ancient presence and its more recent—and tragic—history are commemorated at Nez Perce National Historical Park, a collection of 38 sites scattered throughout a traditional homeland in what is now Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. The park's museum holds over a million objects in its collection, an incomparable document of Nez Perce history and culture.

THE CLOTHING, ORNAMENTS, TOOLS, BAGS, AND BASKETRY—AND THE STORIES they represent—are the focus of a new online exhibit produced by the park and the museum management program of the National Park Service in consultation with the tribe.

The collection, like the park, is a narrative of the Nez Perce experience, the objects invested with a meaning that transcends form and function. From the tribe's perspective, the artifacts are a living part of the culture. They express what it means to be Nimiipuu, as the Nez Perce call themselves.

The Nez Perce homeland encompassed about 13 million acres around the Snake, Salmon, and Columbia Rivers. The diverse ecosystem ranges from shortgrass prairie to sagebrush steppe, from mountain forests to river valleys. The Nez Perce were keenly attuned to the land, structuring not only their practical existence but also their social and ceremonial lives around the seasons. While they were not nomadic, they did move to predetermined areas on a well-thought-out schedule. In early spring, the women went up to the prairies to dig root foods such as camas bulb, wild carrots, and Kous. In August, when the salmon headed upriver to spawn, families moved en masse to the water. The Columbia River basin was one of the richest sources of salmon in the world. In high summer, everyone migrated to the higher elevations, gathering the resources just coming into season and hunting the big game that frequented the heights. Autumn brought a return to the valleys and preparation for winter, in which large quantities of meat, fish, roots, and berries were dried and stored.

A section of the exhibit titled "Seasonal Rounds" describes this aspect of Nez Perce life. Objects include intricately woven bags, cradleboards used to transport infants, and beautifully designed baskets.

WOMEN WERE IN CHARGE OF THE HOUSEHOLD, NOT ONLY EXPERTS IN LOCAL flora but accomplished artisans as well. Their extensive knowledge of the plant world informed Nez Perce cuisine and shaped daily life. Deftly made bags of cornhusk and hemp, and utensils fashioned of bone, mountain sheep, and bison horn, evidence how their knowledge and skill influenced tribal life. The extended family was critical to survival too, part of a system of mutual support. Grandparents were not only teachers, but also the keepers of the past, handed down to new generations in stories.

Above: Items from the park's collection demonstrate Nez Perce artistry. Right: A woman's dress made of wool and felt, decorated with shells and glass beads.

ALL PHOTOS NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK/NPS MUSEUM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Left: **A war bonnet with eagle feathers, a symbol of leadership and honor.** **Right:** **Josiah Redwolf, the last survivor of the Nez Perce war, about 1970.**

UNLIKE MANY TRIBES OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS, THE NEZ PERCE DID NOT HAVE A FORMAL HIERARCHY OF CLANS AND SOCIETIES. THERE WAS RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL AS WELL AS A HIGH VALUE PLACED ON THE COMMON GOOD. THIS TOLERANCE WOULD HAVE UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES WHEN MISSIONARIES ARRIVED IN THE 1830S.

The exhibit showcases Nez Perce style and craftsmanship in the collection of traditional clothing worn by men and women, and the various implements used to perform tasks. Beaded moccasins and leggings, decorated dresses and shirts, hats, and headdresses are all on view. The elaborate adornment was done with elk teeth, shell, glass beads, porcupine quills, feathers, paints, and dye.

UNLIKE MANY TRIBES OF THE NORTHERN PLAINS, THE NEZ PERCE DID NOT HAVE a formal hierarchy of clans and societies. There was respect for the individual as well as a high value placed on the common good. This tolerance would have unforeseen consequences when missionaries arrived in the 1830s. In the Nez Perce worldview people were seen as part of the larger world. There was no notion of domination or ownership of the land. It followed that Nez Perce spirituality was intensely personal. Many people searched for *Way-ya-kin,* one's guardian spirit, which could help them on life's journey. The quest for *Way-ya-kin* often involved a solitary sojourn into the mountains in hope of finding this spirit, which could bestow special skills or powers to aid the seeker throughout life. *Way-ya-kin,* if it could be found, was a serious and personal thing, and was never to be discussed with others. Objects associated with this belief, and other spiritual practices, are also part of the exhibit: drums, headdresses, flutes, talismans, whistles, and rattles, many used in Nez Perce rituals.

The Northwest was part of a trade network that extended from Mexico to the Canadian sub-arctic, and from the Pacific Coast onto the Great Plains. For the Nez Perce—and for Native Americans in general—trade was about much more than the exchange of goods. Through marriages, alliances were cemented that provided access to certain trade items, mutual support in times of strife, and use rights for hunting, fishing, and gathering. Cultural exchange, both in information and ideas, was reinforced by trade. Due to their location in a country laced with rivers, the Nez Perce were centered in this trade system. When horses arrived from the Spanish colonies in the early 1700s, the tribe took to them readily and soon became the legendary riders and breeders of popular lore.

IN THE WAKE OF LEWIS AND CLARK, A STEADY STREAM OF NEW VISITORS CAME to Nez Perce country. The first to come were Christian fur trappers, whose rituals the tribe observed with curiosity. In 1836, the Spaldings and Whitmans came to bring Christianity to the tribes of the Oregon Country. When they arrived, they found an atmosphere of openness among some Nez Perce, developing a small but fervent following. Others resented both the ideas and presence of the missionaries. The missionary movement was seen as a way to assimilate Indians into Euro-American society, part of the larger idea of Manifest Destiny and westward expansion. To better communicate Christian ideas to the tribe, Spalding came up with a written version of the Nez Perce language, publishing Bible tracts on a press he imported from missionary contacts in Hawaii. Though unknown at the time, the seeds of the long, painful saga of dispossession and exile had been planted.

The collection reflects the increasing contact with white culture: forged steel hoes and axe heads; a broad-brimmed black hat. There is also a flintlock rifle, indispensable for hunting, but by the second half of the 19th century used for an altogether different reason.

In time, a rift developed among the Nez Perce. On one side were the Christian converts; on the other those who preferred the old ways. By the middle of the century, the U.S. government was aggressively seeking western land, and in 1853 split the Oregon Territory and made Washington (and northern Idaho) a separate territory, appointing a governor and sending representatives to negotiate with the tribes.

In the Treaty of 1855 the tribe ceded five million acres to the United States, keeping seven million acres to live on, as well as fishing, hunting, and gathering rights to all their traditional land. In exchange, the government was to provide schools, a mill, a carpenter shop, a blacksmith, and annual annuities.

TWO COMPANIES OF CAVALRY WERE SENT IN RESPONSE, FINDING THE NEZ PERCE IN WHITE BIRD CANYON.
THE ARMY, UNPREPARED AND OUTMANEUVERED, SUFFERED ONE OF ITS WORST LOSSES SINCE THE CIVIL WAR.

Five years later, gold was discovered on Nez Perce land. Thousands of illegal prospectors and squatters flooded the area, and soon the tribe was pressured to sign a new treaty, losing nearly all of the land kept under the 1855 treaty. Now only 750,000 acres remained.

Band leaders who would lose their traditional homes under the new treaty refused to sign and the tribe splintered into "treaty" and "non-treaty" factions. For the next 13 years, the non-treaty Nez Perce lived on acreage that remained free, but with a great deal of resentment. It was an uneasy time, rife with uncertainty, perpetually stoked by encroaching settlers.

In the spring of 1877, the U.S. government made a decision on the non-treaty Nez Perce. The Army issued an ultimatum: move to the reservation or face war. The Nez Perce complied, but some young warriors sought revenge against certain settlers who had killed and mistreated Nez Perces earlier. Two companies of cavalry were sent in response, finding the Nez Perce in White Bird Canyon. The Army, unprepared and outmaneuvered, suffered one of its worst losses since the Civil War. After the encounter, one soldier said, "I have been in lots of scrapes, but I never went up against anything like the Nez Perce in all my life."

Left: **Nez Perce tepee circa 1901 and one today.** Right: **A vest edged with smoked deerskin, decorated with glass.**

After White Bird Canyon, the die was cast. There were battles at Cottonwood and Clearwater. The fighting continued through the summer, with the Army pursuing the Indians across Idaho. They crossed the Bitterroot Mountains into Montana, where they were surprised at Big Hole, today a national battlefield. They headed for Canada but few made it. The Nez Perce surrendered at Snake Creek, near the Bear Paw Mountains in northern Montana. Chief Joseph spoke the immortal words, "I will fight no more forever." Most of the captured were sent to Indian Territory in Oklahoma, though they were eventually allowed to return to a reservation in Washington.

IN 1887, CONGRESS PASSED THE DAWES ACT, WHICH GAVE THE PRESIDENT authority to divide reservation land into individually owned plots. Liberal reformers believed this would bring prosperity. The effect, however, further disrupted the traditional way of life. Unallotted lands were considered surplus available for sale to non-Indians. Speculators jumped at the opportunity.

Unaccustomed to living on parceled territory, the Nez Perce nonetheless weathered the allotment period. In 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act, and the tribe recouped some of the land. Today, on a reservation in northern Idaho, they work to preserve the salmon runs and the places where traditional root foods grow, part of a wider effort to maintain tribal ways. There has also been a revival of the Nez Perce language and traditional art forms. The park's research facility, located in the visitor center at Spalding, Idaho, includes archives and a library dedicated to the study of Nez Perce history and culture. The collections include manuscripts, maps, periodicals, reports, and audio and videotapes. There is also a database of approximately 4,000 digital images.

The Nez Perce online exhibit, a powerful evocation of a poignant chapter in the history of the American West, is slated to launch in late October. Go to www.cr.nps.gov/museum/exhibits/index.html. The park's website is at www.nps.gov/nepe.

AUTO LEGEND

HOME OF 'APOGEE OF STYLE' BECOMES A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

They have been described as "rolling sculpture." The high-end, high-style automobiles that came out of Indiana's Auburn Cord Duesenberg factories are world renowned for their classic, innovative design. At a time when Detroit's titans were amassing market share and power, the small boutique car manufacturer played the role of iconoclast, following its own vision.

ALTHOUGH EACH LINE WAS DIFFERENT, THE CARS WERE INSTANTLY RECOGNIZABLE. A PROTOTYPE DRIVEN CROSS-COUNTRY FOR A ROAD TEST—WITH ALL BRAND IDENTIFICATION INTENTIONALLY OMITTED—ATTRACTED WIDESPREAD ATTENTION NONETHELESS. "THEY TRAIL US UP SIDE STREETS, COUNTRY WAYSIDE FILLING STATIONS, AND LITERALLY STAMPEDE THE CAR," RECALLED ONE OF THE DRIVERS.

THE AUBURN CORD DUESENBERG FACILITY IN AUBURN, ONE OF THE FEW INTACT remnants of the independent American auto manufacturers of the first part of the 20th century, recently became a national historic landmark. Although no cars have been built there since 1937 and the factories are gone, the showroom, administration building, parts department, and Cord L-29 Building—named after one of the company's most notable offerings—are largely untouched. They were built with a flair that seemed to surround everything connected with the automaker. The sleek Art Deco styling, suggesting unimpeded forward motion, dominates. The showroom is ornate and imposing; the parts department features a barrel vaulted roof. Automobile legend aside, the architecture itself gives powerful witness to an era.

Since 1974, the showroom and administration building has been occupied by the Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum. It is the only car museum whose exhibit space is a showroom from the period it commemorates. The NHL nomination calls it "12,000 square feet of Art Deco splendor." In 1994, the National Automotive and Truck Museum moved into the parts department and the Cord L-29 building.

Far Left: **Detail, 1935 Auburn speedster.** **Near left:** **Clay models in a design studio.** **Right:** **Rolling sculpture, a 1937 Cord.**

IN THE 1920S AND '30S, AUBURNS, CORDS, AND DUESENBERGS REPRESENTED car manufacturing's apogee of style and engineering. Although each line was different, the cars were instantly recognizable. A prototype driven cross-country for a road test—with all brand identification intentionally omitted—attracted widespread attention nonetheless. "They trail us up side streets, country wayside filling stations, and literally stampede the car," recalled one of the drivers. Everyone wanted a look at "this sleek low creation." At a 1935 auto show, people stood on the running boards of other cars to see over the heads of the crowd gathered around the latest Cord. The company produced many firsts: the first front-wheel-drive passenger car, the first one-piece hood opening from the front, the first model without an exposed vertical radiator shell, and the first open-and-close headlights. Detroit kept an eye on Auburn, where experimental car bodies were shielded by frosted glass windows to discourage corporate espionage. Still, most of the innovations found their way into the mass market.

ALL PHOTOS AUBURN CORD DUESENBERG MUSEUM EXCEPT MICHAEL FURMAN RIGHT AND FAR LEFT

Left: The showroom. **Below:** Gary Cooper and his 1931 Duesenberg, with a custom hood ornament designed by a French sculptor.

THE FACILITY BEGAN AS THE AUBURN AUTOMOBILE COMPANY IN 1903, an outgrowth of the local carriage and wagon trade, an old tradition that by 1890 was one of the state's top five industries. In the 19th century, a flood of German immigrants, many of them skilled woodworkers, found employment in the business. They populated the first auto assembly lines, since the new mode of transport was nothing more than an internal combustion engine on a wagon frame.

This is precisely what Charles Eckhart and his three sons were doing as the new century dawned. The Eckharts, who ran a wagon building business in Auburn, were tinkering with a self-propelled carriage. The idea was hardly new. At that early date there was an automobile trade magazine called *The Horseless Age,* and its reporters watched the Eckharts and related their progress. The operation managed to build 25 automobiles in 1903. The next year, the Eckarts erected a pair of big two-story structures behind the wagon business, and this was the beginning of the company.

Eckhart senior died in 1915 and the family sold the business shortly afterward. The new owner, a Chicago investment banking firm, spent a great deal on capital improvements in anticipation of big sales. But the plan ran into trouble with tough economic conditions after WW I . With the help of marketing guru Roy Faulkner, Auburn turned its fortunes around. One of his ideas was to cater to a segment of society steadily gaining more power and independence: women. Promotional literature depicted them driving down the road in the latest Auburn models. Faulkner had other good ideas as well, and the company thrived into the mid-'20s, when the service and parts building was built.

THE COMPANY PRODUCED MANY FIRSTS: THE FIRST FRONT-WHEEL-DRIVE PASSENGER CAR, THE FIRST ONE-PIECE HOOD OPENING FROM THE FRONT, THE FIRST MODEL WITHOUT AN EXPOSED VERTICAL RADIATOR SHELL, AND THE FIRST OPEN-AND-CLOSE HEADLIGHTS. DETROIT KEPT AN EYE ON AUBURN, WHERE EXPERIMENTAL CAR BODIES WERE SHIELDED BY FROSTED GLASS WINDOWS TO DISCOURAGE CORPORATE ESPIONAGE.

VISIONARY INDUSTRIALIST E.L. CORD FIRST LAID EYES ON THE PLACE IN 1924, when he bought an interest. The company now covered over 18 acres. Cord figured that it wouldn't take much to increase output to 100 cars a day. He moved a backlog of cars by sprucing them up with nickel plating and two-tone paint. The profits helped launch his plan.

Cord's marketing was straightforward. He asked customers and dealers what they liked and what they didn't. He invited mechanics to look his cars over and prospective drivers to take a ride. Cord figured that a good product would sell itself. Auburns were high-end specialty vehicles, but Cord pitched them with a regular-guy delivery. Ad copy read, "These cars are built by a home-owning group of workmen in Auburn, Indiana . . . "

BETWEEN 1910 AND 1920, THE AUTO INDUSTRY RESEMBLED THE DOT COM boom. The frenzy to get in on the action produced two groups of automakers. Henry Ford and others went for mass production and economy of scale. Their inventory was limited but dependable, but the profit on each sale was relatively small. To make this approach work, they relied on standardization, mechanization, speed, and control over their workers.

The other group, independent manufacturers like Auburn, bought parts from suppliers, stored them in big warehouses on site, and had teams of seasoned machinists build the cars by hand. The price was high but so was the quality.

Cutting edge factories at Ford, Buick, and Oldsmobile manufactured their own parts and filled the ranks of management with college educated engineers and managers. On the assembly floors of the independents, senior craftsmen ran things and the system tended to be more collegial than hierarchical. This allowed for more experimentation, evidenced by a wider range of models.

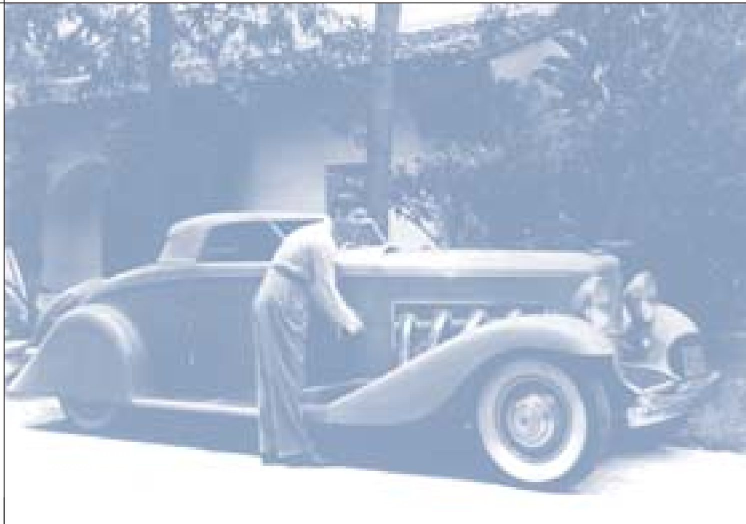
Detroit's chief rival was Cleveland, with Indianapolis a close second. In part because of its history of carriage manufacturing and in part because of its well-developed rail system, Indiana was a hub of the industry. Independent companies thrived there, producing famous makes such as Stutz and Marmon.

Within two years, E.L. Cord completely took over the company. The 34-year-old CEO began expanding his empire. Output doubled. A new line emerged—the Cord—and the company acquired

Below: **Clark Gable with his 1935 Duesenberg convertible.** **Right:** **The entrance to the showroom and administration building.**

the Duesenberg Motors Corporation, which had gone bankrupt. Of the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg trio, the Duesenberg became the deluxe item, the absolute best the company had to offer. Along with the Cord, it was at the forefront of the auto aesthetic, experimenting continually with new curves and lines, taking on dramatic new looks and astonishing consumers. The cars were the testing grounds for the fertile minds of company engineers. In 1929, the Cord L-29 rolled off the assembly line—using front wheel drive. The technology had been used in tanks and taxicabs, but never before in a passenger car. Today, the building constructed specially for its development is part of the national historic landmark. The company branched into racecars, not only for the publicity but because it was a natural outlet for research and development.

As sales skyrocketed, dealers opened in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, London, and a host of other cities around the world. Still, in many ways, the increasingly eclipsed Auburn was most critical to the company. While generous spending fueled the Cord-Duesenberg legend, the consistently selling Auburn paid for it all.



THE GREAT DEPRESSION WAS HARSH FOR BOUTIQUE AUTOMAKERS. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler could offer decent cars at low prices. Independents like Auburn Cord Duesenberg were suddenly relics of the Roaring Twenties. E.L. Cord moved to Beverly Hills, spending less time on the affairs of the company. As the Depression deepened, sales died off rapidly and new management took over. The company made extra money stamping metal kitchen cabinets for Montgomery Ward. It began to move a substantial amount of its investment out of the automobile industry with its eye on the next big thing: aircraft.

The end came in November 1937. Dallas Winslow, a Detroit businessman, offered a bankruptcy court $85,000 for the remaining inventory of spare parts. For an extra $25,000 he bought the administration building. He ran a parts and service business for the vehicles still on the road. The 1950s brought a wave of nostalgia for the cars and a restoration boom. Winslow stayed in business supplying parts to enthusiasts. As the Auburn Cord Duesenberg legend grew, there was increasing demand. Winslow began doing restorations at the old facility, employing local people who had worked at the company during its heyday.

IN 1951, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART NAMED THE CORD 810 ONE OF THE greatest car designs of all time. Far and wide, Auburns, Cords, and Duesenbergs are listed in all-time "best" lists and are commonly considered among the top classic cars ever made. A 2003 Art Deco exhibit at the Victoria and Albert Museum of Art in London included a Cord. At a classic car auction in California in 2004, a Duesenberg went for $4.5 million.

Today, stepping into the old buildings, one is able to imagine the sense of style, the electricity, and the aura of creative genius that must have prevailed. The showroom floor, triangular terrazzo tiles in white, gray-green, and oxblood, is not the sight one normally associates with the history of the auto industry, nor is the Philippine walnut in the office suites, or the multitiered metal light fixtures. But it is details like those that speak volumes about this particular history, one that will be preserved in perpetuity among America's most cherished places.

TODAY, STEPPING INTO THE OLD BUILDINGS, ONE IS ABLE TO IMAGINE THE SENSE OF STYLE, THE ELECTRICITY, AND THE AURA OF CREATIVE GENIUS THAT MUST HAVE PREVAILED. THE SHOWROOM FLOOR, TRIANGULAR TERRAZZO TILES IN WHITE, GRAY-GREEN, AND OXBLOOD, IS NOT THE SIGHT ONE NORMALLY ASSOCIATES WITH THE HISTORY OF THE AUTO INDUSTRY, NOR IS THE PHILIPPINE WALNUT IN THE OFFICE SUITES, OR THE MULTITIERED METAL LIGHT FIXTURES.

The national historic landmark nomination for the Auburn Cord Duesenberg facility can be viewed at www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/designations/samples/in/auburn%20cord.pdf. The museum is online at http://acdmuseum.org/. For more information, contact Gran Roberts, the museum's director of marketing, at (260) 925-1444, email granr@acdmuseum.org.

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BY CLARKE THOMAS

PITTSBURGH IN THE FIFTIES

Pittsburgh, the "forge of democracy," was exhausted in the wake of World War II, looking to revive, regenerate, and throw off the perennial problems of floods and smoke. Enter the Allegheny Conference, a group of top businessmen with a plan to remake the city—and the city's idea of itself. The photographs shown here, created under the direction of one of the century's premier image makers, Roy Stryker, intended to capture Pittsburgh "as it really is, not only as the nation's workshop and the heart of heavy industry, but as a dynamic city with an implemented plan for the future." Today these images—taken from *Witness to the Fifties: The Pittsburgh Photographic Library, 1950-53,* catalogue of an exhibition at the Carnegie Museum of Art—"are at one level a reflection of the reality of what Pittsburgh had been and what it was becoming," writes Constance Schulz in the introduction. On another level, she says, they reflect "multiple perceptions of what Pittsburgh's past meant, and what its future ought to be." In 1947, the conference recognized that "the extent of public information and education determines the rate of community progress." Stryker, tapped by the conference for its education effort, had forged a legendary reputation directing the likes of Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans in creating iconic images of Depression-era farmers for the federal government—"to help educate Congress and the public about the need for radical solutions to the severe poverty," writes Schulz. "By the end, however, building the file as a comprehensive record—first of American agriculture, then of American life—became more important to [Stryker] than immediate use of individual pictures in it." In Pittsburgh, his staff shot the tearing down and the building up; the revival of big steel; a soon-supplanted African American community; the push to link with the Pennsylvania Turnpike, forerunner of the interstate highway system. The results were channeled to *Life, Look, Fortune,* the *Saturday Evening Post,* and other major media. "Roy Stryker talked to his photographers about creating photographic stories, but in reality what they produced were extended photographic essays that transcended the limits of a discrete particular story," Schulz says. On this 40th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, *Common Ground* looks back at this remarkable document of the urban renewal era. **Right:** Clyde Hare. The new works, Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation. February 1952.

ALL PHOTOS CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF PITTSBURGH

CLARK
CLARK
CANDY
BAR

IT WAS A DAY THAT PITTSBURGH HAD LONG AWAITED: MAY 18, 1950— the day that the first building would be demolished to make way for the development of Point State Park and Gateway Center in Pittsburgh's Lower Triangle. "Work on Point Park Launched; First of Old Buildings Torn Down at Site" was the front page headline in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* concerning the event. The *Pittsburgh Press* headline read, "Point Wrecking Job Starts."[1]

Governor James Duff gave the signal for a one-ton wrecking ball to smash into the 101-year-old two-story red brick warehouse located in the industrial and commercial slum that then covered the point, where the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers join to form the Ohio. The demolition of the building "in the rear of 110 Penn Avenue" was witnessed by a crowd of 2,000, including hundreds of school children given a holiday. Also present were the Carnegie Institute of Technology band, which had marched down from Fifth and Grant, and the University of Pittsburgh ROTC band, which had approached the site from Eleventh and Penn. The event was the kickoff for what became known as Pittsburgh Renaissance I—more than a decade during which buildings were razed to clear space for Point State Park and for the construction of new skyscrapers in what became known as Gateway Center.

Within weeks of this day, a group of photographers headed by Roy Stryker arrived in Pittsburgh to begin a dual assignment—photographing the beginning phase of the Renaissance and recording the activities of numerous social welfare agencies under the banner of the Community Chest. The Stryker team was to spend nearly three years creating the Pittsburgh Photographic Library.

None of the newspaper stories mentioned Richard King Mellon, the financial and industrial magnate who was always credited along with Mayor Lawrence for leading the Renaissance effort. Perhaps he was only fulfilling a description often made—that he liked to operate in the background. He didn't have to flaunt the power he possessed with an empire that included Mellon Bank, Gulf Oil Corporation, Koppers Corporation, T. Mellon and Sons, and more.

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* dwelt directly on the significance of the Point ceremony. "For nearly a century, civic leaders here have been dreaming of creating a park on the Forks of the Ohio River, where the City of Pittsburgh was born. The dream will near reality today when workers start clearing condemned structures from the 36 acre park area . . . When Gov. Bluff signals the start of the demolition, he will set in motion a chain of events which, within the next few years, will literally change the face of the historic Point."

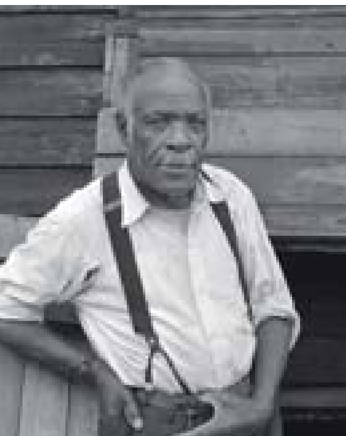
Actually, the demolition ceremony was but one element of Welcome Week, an annual affair sponsored by the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce. On the morning of that same day, the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company broke ground for a $44 million addition to the South Side Works, with 16 new 250-ton open-hearth furnaces. (The *Sun-Telegraph* gave the cost at $60 million.) Land for the expansion had been acquired by the Urban Redevelopment Authority; the *Post-Gazette* reported that this would require moving 213 owners and tenants. A model of the projected plant was on display at the City-County Building, part of a set of Welcome Week displays that heralded other major projects in the region.

At the Grant Building, citizens could view a model of the new Greater Pittsburgh International Airport being constructed 14 miles west of the Golden Triangle. The Jenkins Arcade exhibited a model of the Civic Arena with its retractable roof, to be built in the Lower Hill for the Civic Light Opera. In the public's consciousness, also, was the westward expansion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, opened in 1940, the extension to the Ohio state line to open on December 26.

The Welcome Week festivities give us a glimpse of the Pittsburgh into which the Stryker photographic team was to enter a few weeks later. It was a Pittsburgh whose downtown was unusually vibrant. It was the center of work, shopping, and entertainment in ways that later were diminished by competition from outlying shopping centers, starting with the East Hills Shopping Center in 1955, and from shopping malls, beginning with the Northway Mall in 1960.

Above right: Student priests viewing the city from an observation point by Grandview Avenue and Maple Terrace. Elliott Erwitt. September 1950. **Erwitt was probably the most renowned lensman who worked for the Pittsburgh Photographic Library, say editors Constance Schulz and Steven Plattner in *Witness to the Fifties*. "Having no car, Erwitt walked alone for mile after mile along downtown streets and through neighborhoods."** **Above left: Demolition of the Pennsylvania Railroad warehouse, with downtown in the distance. Clyde Hare. September 1951.** **Hare had his own auto; in short order he was off shooting both the construction and the demolition. "It was almost like having a quarter of your city torn down," he said. "Everywhere you turned there was a pile driver."** **Left: Alcoa Building contrasted against the Lower Hill area. Clyde Hare. April 1952.** **Hare used his telephoto lens to create stunning juxtapositions, say Schulz and Plattner. Here the new Alcoa building gleams against an African American community slated for "slum clearance." Schulz says the project's first few months were "hectic" due to director Stryker's idea of starting with a major photographic exhibit—enthusiastically received by the Carnegie Museum of Art.**

THE POINT WAS ALWAYS THE FOCUS, IN SPITE OF (OR MAYBE BECAUSE OF) that it was an industrial slum of railroad yards, warehouses, and housing. Mayor Lawrence was born in the Point neighborhood in 1889 but by the end of the World War II, it was a far cry from earlier days when its Exposition Society buildings were the hub of Pittsburgh's social and cultural life. A group of civic leaders, inspired by the success of Philadelphia's 1876 Centennial Exposition, formed the Pittsburgh Exposition Society in 1889 to raise $450,000 to build three giant structures between the Allegheny River and the freight yards—Exposition Hall, Mechanical Hall, and Music Hall. Even when fire destroyed Music Hall in 1900, money was raised to build "an even more splendid monument" at a cost of $600,000.



Later, civic officials began seeking help from outside planners, including Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., son of the designer of New York City's Central Park, but neither Olmsted's proposals nor those of others were ever accepted. In 1939, the Pittsburgh Regional Planning Association raised $50,000 to retain Robert Moses, famed commissioner of parks and parkways of New York, "to investigate the arterial problems of Pittsburgh, with particular reference to conditions in the Triangle." Moses wanted to remove the "dead or dying" railroad properties, but he also rejected the idea of tearing down the Manchester and Point bridges in order to rehabilitate historic Fort Pitt. Moses held that "traffic rather than history must be the decisive factor in the reconstruction of the apex of the Pittsburgh Triangle and in the establishment of Point Park."

While the Moses plan didn't fly either, it did concentrate Pittsburghers' attention on the need to confront the city's problems. If nothing else, the St. Patrick's Day floods of 1936, which inundated large areas of downtown, had been sufficient notice that action no longer could be delayed.

Most significant, in July 1941, the City Council passed a strong anti-smoke ordinance, based on a St. Louis model. The St. Louis theory was that if water could be rendered potable by removing impurities before distribution, then air could be cleansed by controlling the quality of fuel before consumption.[2] Five months later came Pearl Harbor, and all plans were shelved as Pittsburgh turned its attention, as in previous wars, to being the nation's "Forge of Democracy."

The circumstances of the war helped shape the transforming events after the end of the conflict. The story is that when the industrialist Richard King Mellon went into the U.S. Army as a transportation officer (the reason he thereafter was addressed as General Mellon), he realized that he could no longer personally run all the corporations in his conglomerate empire. But when he began to search for executives to head his Pittsburgh-headquartered firms, he found that most of the highly capable men he sought had no interest in moving to "smoky Pittsburgh." And if they did, their wives balked. "Go to Pittsburgh and you divorce me first" was the apocryphal line related in subsequent years. Executive prospects and their wives

Far left: Man on Webster Avenue near Fullerton Street, Hill District. James P. Blair. September 1952. The project intern, Blair honed his skills under Stryker, who was more of a teacher or father figure than a boss, exemplified by an "ability to teach photographers to see with an informed and sympathetic eye," say Schulz and Plattner. Blair was known for "approaching people directly in the summer days before air conditioning when men, women, and children sat on the stoops hoping to catch a cool breeze." Near left: Girl at the door, Woods Run District. Esther Bubley. May-June 1950. Bubley "proved to be a versatile photographer with a great warmth of understanding for humanity," say Schulz and Plattner. "She developed a remarkable ability to put her subjects—particularly children—at ease, becoming almost invisible . . . Her pictures had an uncanny way of reflecting her subjects, rather than interpreting them." Right: Three galvanized wash tubs, behind the 2200 block of Forbes Avenue. Richard Saunders. April 1951. Stryker had a knack for matching the right person to the job. Saunders, a black lensman, shot the African American Lower Hill District, to be razed for an arena. Saunders moved into the home of the city's first black fire lieutenant, who gave him community entrée and a heads up with the police, likely to question an African American man walking the streets with cameras around his neck. A group of boys caught Saunders' eye stripping brass, copper, lead pipes, and window sash weights from soon-to-be demolished buildings, to earn money for their families. A wrecking crew foreman told him, "The kids do a better job on these old houses than the crew of men I have working for me—they take out all the plumbing and fixtures overnight! By morning we don't have a thing to do, just pull the house down." Saunders spent two weeks photographing one of the boys at home with his mother and eight other children, "ill-fed, ill-housed [with] never enough clothing to cover their frail bodies."

Above: Storefront of a Giant Eagle Market. Elliott Erwitt. October 1950. Stryker paid premium New York rates for his top lensmen (while saving money with up-and-comers), partly why he went over budget the first year—an ominous sign despite the success of his Museum of Art exhibit, which drew 42,000 over a seven-month run. **Right: Children watching television in the window of a store on East Ohio Street. Regina Fisher. August 1951.** Fisher trained as an artist, not a photographer. "I never used a light meter in my life," she said. "I couldn't have read one." A "heavy shooter," she relied on gut reaction. "Stryker said my first day, 'Film is cheap but your time is not. So [use] as much as you want.' I had never worked with a generous amount of materials. It is the key to gut photography, because you take chances. You see something happening. You're not quite sure. You press the camera button, and your gut tells you something's going on, and you know if you wait longer, it's gone." A shot of Fisher squinting into her camera graced the cover of the 1951 *Life* young photographers' issue, which was dominated by Stryker staffers. "He really didn't care much about your photographs," she recalled. "He cared more about you and how you thought."

were all too well aware of Pittsburgh's reputation as a city where automobile lights often were necessary at noon because of the smoke and where businessmen took an extra white shirt to work for a change before going to lunch.

At that point, Mellon is said to have realized that either something had to be done or he would need to move his headquarters. With Mellon's crucial backing, the result was the 1943 formation of the Citizens Sponsoring Committee on Postwar Planning, later renamed the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, soon a powerhouse emulated in other communities across the county.

From the beginning, the effectiveness of the conference was fortified not only by the dominating power of Mellon but by two other simple rules. One was that its board was composed of the heads of corporations, never the lower ranking officers. Second, a CEO could not send a substitute. Under the procedure, board members were in a put-up-or-shut-up situation. Decisions could be made on the spot.

When the war ended, Pittsburgh was exhausted. The city was full of smoke and work-worn plants desperately needing renewal. Its workforce was tired, eager to catch up on the compensation virtually frozen during the war, and fearful of layoffs and another depression. It was a city where there had been almost nothing new in public or private amenities since before the stock market collapse of 1929. At the same time, Pittsburgh, populated with defense industries, shared in the can-do optimism that was a legacy of the war effort.

In that setting, 1946 became what civic leader Robert Pease calls “the seminal year.” After the numerous attempts to solve problems via the “voluntary” sector, “the post-World War II business elite understood that private economic objectives necessitated a dramatic expansion of public powers and expenditures.”[3] The Allegheny Conference set an agenda focused on three major goals. One was flood control; this effort required action in Washington, DC, to secure congressional funding for upstream dams and reservoirs. Second was revival of the smoke-control movement, which meant working with city government. And third was the revival of downtown, centering first on some kind of park at the Point. Again, this would require working with government through its powers of eminent domain, whether with local government, with Washington on the possibility of a national park, or with the commonwealth for a state park.

Edgar Kaufmann, the department store magnate, commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to draft a park plan (in the 1930s, Kaufmann had hired Wright to design his vacation home, Fallingwater). Wright came up with a huge structure that would have covered most of the site. “It showed a huge, slope-sided, tiered, circular main building at the Point, one-fifth of a mile in diameter and 175 feet high [with] 13 levels.”[4] It perhaps is best described as a ziggurat, a gigantic cone-shaped structure that was the temple tower edifice of the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. Kaufmann immediately recognized that the Wright plan would never do and stuffed it in a drawer without showing it to any of his fellow business leaders. The commonwealth selected the Point to be a state park, a quiet recreation area.

Meanwhile, the conference team was fashioning an approach that was to become a model for the development of American cities. The first step was the establishment of the Urban Redevelopment Authority. As for the legality of the extensive amount of property condemnation necessary, the path seemed clear because the land was being taken for a public purpose. But Pittsburgh’s leadership had embarked upon a revolutionary, risky endeavor: transforming the area beyond the park. They planned to clear land for Gateway Center—a set of skyscraper business buildings—to signal in a physical way a changed Pittsburgh, fulfilling what came to be called the first Pittsburgh Renaissance.

Above: Near the Tenth Street Bridge, South Side. Elliott Erwitt. October 1950. **Although only on the job four months before being drafted, Erwitt did some of his best work during this formative period.**

From time immemorial, there had been no question concerning the right of kings and governments to condemn private property for public purpose. But what the city planners now proposed was something quite new—condemning private property belonging to one set of owners to turn it over, in the name of the public good, to another set of private owners.

On July 29, 1947, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upheld the state's 1945 Redevelopment Act, and the way was paved for the Urban Redevelopment Authority to sell to "civic minded" citizens a $150,000 bond issue, the first long-term urban redevelopment authority debt ever issued in the United States.

Not everyone was happy about it, particularly those in the four-block area scheduled to become Gateway Center. Historian Roy Lubove had a more sardonic description: "In essence, the Pittsburgh Renaissance represented a response to a crisis situation, one that precipitated a dramatic expansion of public enterprise and investment to serve corporate needs. It established a reverse welfare state." This bothered many. They agreed that while the area condemned for the park clearly was blighted, the 23 acre site proposed for Gateway Center clearly was not.

Not surprisingly, property owners and businesses had particular qualms. According to Rachel Ballier Colker, "Over 80 buildings, some estimated to be a century old and others only 25 years old, stood on land selected for Gateway Center's three office buildings and a plaza. The congested urban area had some dilapidated and abandoned structures, but many buildings housed thriving businesses and professional office space. Many protested that although Gateway Center was intended to improve conditions within the urban district, the plan overlooked more valuable aspects of the community. The president of the Congress of Women's Clubs, located in a building designated for demolition, testified: 'We've heard lots about greenery, but not a word about women. We've been at 408 Penn Avenue for 26 years, yet your plans make no place for a more essential factor, women and their welfare work.'"

The same block was the location of the elegant Mayfair Hotel. Built in 1895, it had the only rooftop restaurant in the city, as well as a popular basement lounge, the Bradford Grille. But, in common with almost every later assessment, the writer of this magazine article concludes: "In retrospect, few would argue that the overall plan was not a success."[5]

While the eminent domain question worked its way through the courts, plans went ahead both for the park and for what would become Gateway Center. But the Renaissance also went beyond the Golden Triangle. The assistance that the URA gave to the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation, though less publicized, was nonetheless critical in the city's economic growth.

Below: Patients and their parents in group therapy, Childrens Hospital. Esther Bubley. November 1951. Bubley—frustrated over having to shoot parks, diners, and the like while the men clambered up scaffolds to take dramatic construction shots—was assigned to build a photographic file showcasing the contributions of the city's Community Chest agencies. She roomed at the hospital for three weeks, winning the trust of patients and doctors while witnessing diabetic children learn to inject insulin and a small boy succumb to cancer. The Museum of Modern Art purchased prints of her entire series—850 photographs.

The magnitude of the project and speed with which it was accomplished were remarkable. Gateway Center included three 20- to 24-story cruciform stainless steel office buildings that opened in 1952 and 1953. These were followed by a state office building, a Hilton Hotel, and two more skyscrapers, the stainless-steel U.S. Steel-Mellon Bank Building and the aluminum-sheathed Alcoa Building. These two structures overlook Mellon Square, a small but attractive addition to the downtown landscape.[6]

After Demolition Day launched the building-wrecking, structural plans for the razed buildings were carefully made in case they had to be rebuilt if the court effort failed. Many in hindsight felt such a restoration project would have been almost impossible, but the fact that such contingency measures were followed is a sign both of the uncertainty involved as well as of the unusual faith of Pittsburgh leadership that ultimately all would be well.

Indeed, eight months before the U.S. Supreme Court finally spoke, there was a day that some historians rank in importance above Demolition Day: February 14, 1950, when all the legal documents for Point State Park and Gateway Center were signed by state, city, and business officials. Reporter Mel Seidenberg's front page story in the *Post-Gazette* read: "On a 23 acre site adjacent to the Point Park development will rise, by 1952, the Pittsburgh dream—a landscaped 'Gateway Center,' complete with three 20 story office skyscrapers." The newspaper carried a picture of 22 persons signing the legal documents. The caption read: "It was a happy and momentous occasion for all concerned with Pittsburgh's progress."[7]

Gateway Center Demolition Area. Elliott Erwitt. October 1950.
"Many of [Erwitt's] best Pittsburgh photographs present the viewer with powerful contradictions," say Schulz and Plattner.

JUST TO THE EAST OF DOWNTOWN WAS THE LOWER HILL DISTRICT, AN AREA that contained an unusual combination of appalling slum conditions and a vibrant black commercial and entertainment corridor, with shops and bar-restaurants famous across the nation for their jazz. The area, once the neighborhood for Jews, Slavs, and other Eastern European residents, was segregated but open to whites for shopping and bar hopping. Many of the photos in the Stryker group were taken there, a decade before the area was razed and its culture largely obliterated to make way for the Civic Arena.

Many of the 8,000 residents "lived in slum conditions perpetuated by absentee slumlord owners, with outhouses not uncommon among dwellings built in the 19th century for low-paid workers. [There was] lots of gambling, prostitution, rooming houses, small hotels, and various institutions serving needy families and single men, such as the Pittsburgh Association for the Improvement of the Poor, the YMCA, churches, and other organizations."[8] These conditions provided the legal rationale for razing the Lower Hill in the name of urban redevelopment.

When the Stryker photography team arrived in Pittsburgh, there were only three public pools in the city where black people could swim—two in the Lower Hill District and what was then called "The Inkwell" on Washington Boulevard near East Liberty. Swimming pools had been a continuous flash point in race relations.

According to Walter Worthington, the Washington Boulevard pool was a source of friction from the time it first opened in 1927. He recalls being beaten in the summer of 1932 by policemen when he and a friend tried to swim there. Sporadic efforts at desegregation after that continually failed.[9] Later, after World War II, the matter would become entangled with anti-Communist politics. During the 1948 presidential campaign, a group called "Young Progressives for [Henry] Wallace" set out to establish "the rights of negroes to swim at Highland Pool." A biracial group would appear on Sunday afternoons, only to be quickly confronted by an angry white crowd. On August 22, 16 of the Progressives were arrested.[10]

The media had a field day linking race, Reds, and riots, as typified by a *Pittsburgh Press* headline: "Highland Pool Red Riot Cost City $8000 . . . Commies Call Tune at Taxpayer Expense." The story commenced, "Pittsburgh taxpayers found out today how much it costs to finance a successful Communist 'incident.' The bill for rioting at Highland Park swimming pool . . . came to a cool $8,000 for extra police protection alone." The bill in question was the cost for more than 150 city policemen, some in swimsuits, assigned to the pool to maintain order and "to escort Negroes from trolley stops a quarter mile away from the pool."[11]

Watching a fire on Diamond Street. Clyde Hare. July 1952. **For Hare, shooting Pittsburgh was a lifelong passion; the 1990s saw the publishing of his book, *Clyde Hare's Pittsburgh*.**

Above: Remains of a warehouse being razed for Point State Park, with Gateway Center rising in the background and the roof of the colonial Fort Pitt blockhouse barely visible at right. Clyde Hare. February 1952. The Pittsburgh Photographic Library, despite grand intentions, ended all too soon as funds ran out and the reality set in that it could not support itself. "Roy Stryker was a genius at training and directing photographers,"say Schulz and Plattner. "But he had no experience as a fundraiser, nor any desire to become one." Explanations are many for the project's demise: the backers were only interested in publicity; Stryker's New Deal past and reform interest were doubly suspect; and—given Pittsburgh's conservative work ethic—he didn't seem to be doing anything in his office sanctuary, removed from the streets of the city.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1950, PITTSBURGH WAS CHANGING BUT WITH MANY more changes yet to come, both for the better and for worse. John P. Rubin, executive director of the Urban Redevelopment Authority at the time, regrets that the clearance and rebuilding didn't extend Gateway Center farther into the tangled warren of streets and buildings eastward. But that view is disputed by Arthur Ziegler, executive director of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, who contends that such a move would have destroyed what he considers the most viable, interesting area of downtown in the 1990s, the Forbes Avenue corridor between Stanwix and Grant.[12]

Instead of a Gateway Center expansion, the authority's efforts leapfrogged to the Lower Hill and, eventually, elsewhere. In the 1960s, those moves were to spawn a countermovement—epitomized by the formation of the landmarks foundation—of citizen interests that questioned the wholesale redevelopment of neighborhoods.

The civil rights movement opened up accommodations and broadened job opportunities for the minority population. The good fortune was to last until the steel mills and related manufacturing plants began closing in the early 1980s. The dream of a cultural acropolis in what had been the Lower Hill was abandoned for financial reasons. That, in turn, prompted H.J. Heinz II in the 1960s to turn his attention to renovating the former Penn-Loew's Theater into a hall for the Pittsburgh Symphony and other performing groups, which spurred in the 1980s the development of the cultural district that now lies to the east.

By whatever measure, the early 1950s were critical times in the history of 20th century Pittsburgh and, indeed, in the history of cities around the world—crucial years captured in the rich assortment of photographs that became the Pittsburgh Photographic Library.

Adapted from *Witness to the Fifties: The Pittsburgh Photographic Library, 1950-53*, © 1999 University of Pittsburgh Press, excerpted by permission. Clarke Thomas, author of a series of books on the city, was a senior editor at the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. For a look at Pittsburgh in the prewar era, see the companion volume *Luke Swank: Modernist Photographer* by Howard Bossen, also from the Press.

Notes

1. News stories cited in the account of Demolition Day that follows are from the May 17, 18, and 19 (1950) issues of the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, the *Pittsburgh Press*, and the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*.
2. Joel Tarr, *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective* (Akron: Akron University Press, 1996), 3.
3. Roy Lubove, *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), 105.
4. Robert C. Alberts, *The Shaping of the Point* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press), 92, 96.
5. Rachel Ballier Colker, "Gaining Gateway Center: Eminent Domain, Redevelopment, and Resistance," *Pittsburgh History*, 78:3 (Fall 1995), 134-44.
6. Lubove, *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh*, 124-26.
7. *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, February 14, 1950.
8. Aldo Colautti, interview with Clarke Thomas, Pittsburgh, October 23, 1997. Colautti, then a *Post Gazette* reporter, later was to be executive secretary to Mayor Joseph Barr.
9. Walter Worthington, Hill District businessman and amateur historian, interview with Clarke Thomas, Pittsburgh, November 9, 1997.
10. *Pittsburgh Press*, August 23, 1948.
11. *Pittsburgh Press*, February 18, 1950.
12. Clarke Thomas interview with Arthur Ziegler, Pittsburgh, September 15, 1997. Ziegler is a founder and president of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation.

ALL PHOTOS DAVID ANDREWS/NPS

SURVIVING STEEL

PITTSBURGH IN THE POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID ANDREWS

Pittsburgh is all steep bluffs and long descents, a succession of ravines eroded out of the Allegheny Plateau. The main road into downtown—a slow drop from the heights into the flats of an ancient delta—hugs a slope high above the Monongahela River. Off in the distance, worker housing rises and falls with the rhythm of the hills. It's one of world's finest city sites, a panorama at the confluence of three winding waterways. It's also proof of the dictum "environment is destiny," made to order for the heroic age of manufacturing. ¶ The hills greet the rivers not with steep banks, but with wide plains. It's ideal for a railroad, which arrived in 1852, transforming quiet towns in its wake. Industrialists merely poked chutes into the hillsides, funneling coal to furnaces in the plain, the rest of the nation a quick shipment away by boat or rail. ¶ The emperors of American success left the imprint of colossal ambitions—with palatial rail stations, lordly mansions, and the works of more distinguished architects than any other city in America. But nowhere was the colossal more evident than in the spectacles of fire and cloud that epitomized the place, the steel plants. Eventually, the city itself took on the image of the machine, adopting the architecture of corporate modernism in an effort to remake itself after World War II. Today, the contrast of early ebullient and sheet-metal sleek animates the downtown. ¶ But for how long? "There is a perfect mania here for improvements," one visitor said in the 1850s. "Every day somebody commences to tear down an old house and put up a new one with an iron front." Preservation has always been tough in this practical-minded town.

Left: **Downtown Pittsburgh, a study in contrasts.**

I'M DESCENDING A STEEP GRADE INTO THE FORMER COMPANY BOROUGH OF Homestead—once the site of the nation's largest steel mill—and onto a bridge that high-jumps the Monongahela. Below, in the days of Big Steel, the Homestead Works stretched as far as the eye could see. Now big-box stores fill the expanse, a city unto itself.

At the end of the bridge I swing onto the main street. A listless air prevails, though promise lingers. Across an empty lot the back of the mall stares vacantly. The developers promised a downtown revival, but there are no walkways from there.

Up ahead is the Bost Building, headquarters of Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, a Victorian gem amidst the decay. Rivers of Steel is managed by a nonprofit in partnership with the National Park Service and the commonwealth. It looks to revitalize communities through cultural tourism, preservation, and education programs. The long-term objective, says director Augie Carlino, is a national park, which could draw a projected 300,000 visitors annually, create 400 jobs, and pump more than $25 million a year into the local economy.

We're looking at a lithograph in the entrance hall of the Bost Building, done by Edwin Rowe in 1892. An army of Pinkerton agents, hired to protect the Homestead mill, is surrendering to strikers.

In those days, steel hands peaked at 30, their strength starting to go by 35. Most died before 50. They lived in ramshackle shanties and overcrowded tenements. Saloons were many—to slake the thirst as well as cleanse the throat of dust and particles of steel.

The unskilled, many of them immigrants from the Old World, took what they could get. The skilled, who enjoyed the advantage of a common language with the brass, organized.

Andrew Carnegie—owner of Homestead Works, who wanted his plant to go nonunion—was christening libraries in Scotland when the strike threatened in 1892. Company Chairman Henry Clay Frick ringed the place with a three-mile fence, topped with barbed wire, ordering 300 Pinkertons to be delivered with "absolute secrecy." When talks fizzled, the workforce was discharged, and promptly invited to sign individual contracts. No one did. The crux of it, said a union communiqué, was "putting the control of each of our great national industries into the hands of one or a few men."

A few days later, the strikers discovered two barges of Pinkertons being towed up the river. A furious battle ensued. When the agents laid down their arms, the strikers and their wives administered a brutal beating.

The nation turned its eyes to Homestead. Congress held hearings; sympathy strikes broke out at other Carnegie plants. Alexander Berkman, a 25-year-old anarchist, tried to assassinate Frick. The commonwealth called out the militia. The strike finally collapsed, debilitating unionism in steel for years to come.

THE BOST BUILDING, A UNION HEADQUARTERS AND LOOKOUT POINT DURING THE STRIKE DEBACLE, HAS BEEN REFURBISHED AS A VISITOR CENTER AND REPOSITORY—WITH EXHIBIT SPACE, 12,000 SLIDES, OVER 200 VIDEOS, A REFERENCE LIBRARY, AND THOUSANDS OF ORAL HISTORIES, MAPS, AND BLUEPRINTS.

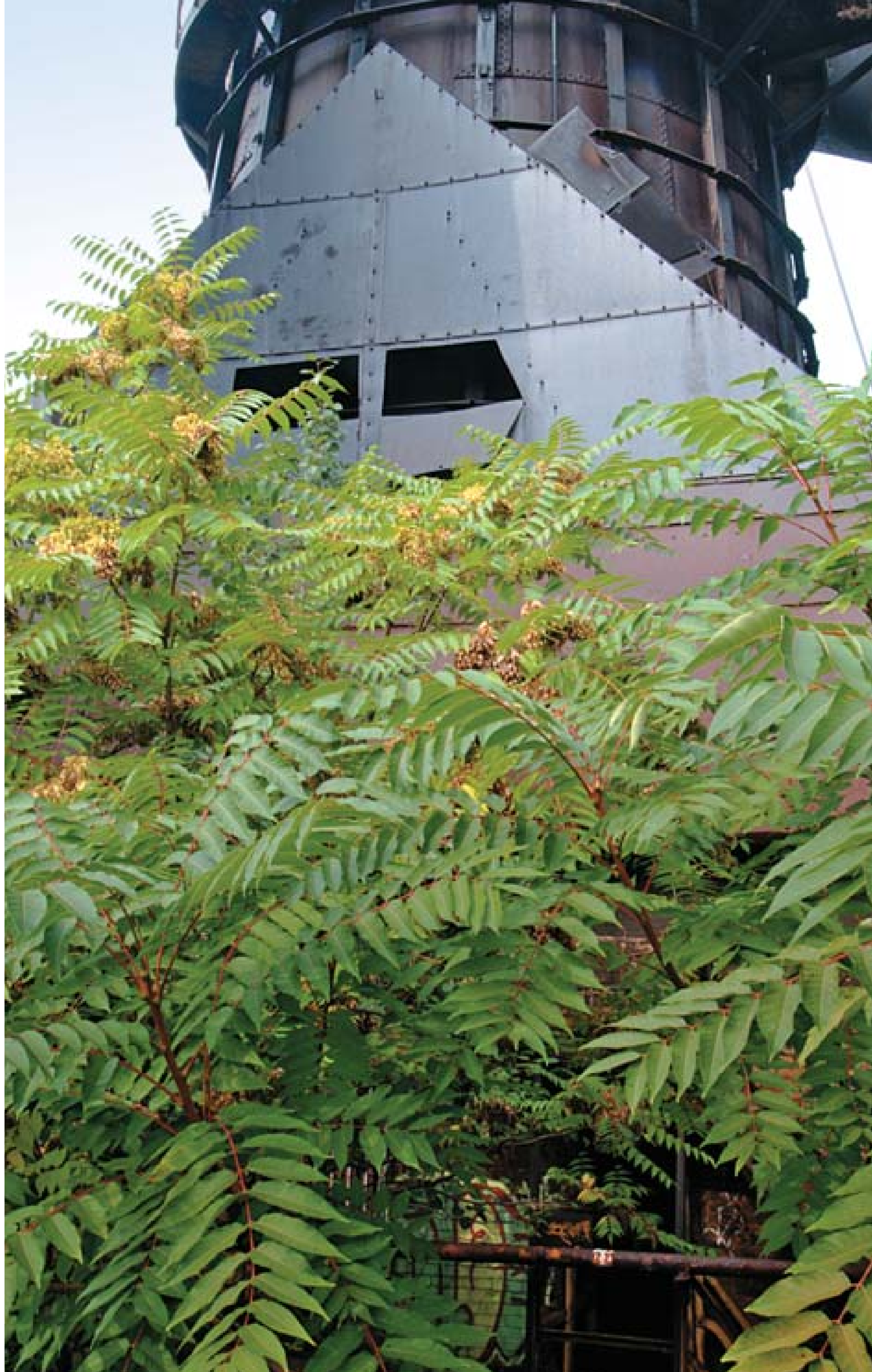
Above and right: **Views of the Carrie Furnace complex, once a key cog in the U.S. Steel empire, now silent. Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area hopes to convert the complex into a museum.**

Rapid industrialization is sure to inflict pain, writes John Morton Blum in *Pittsburgh: The Story of an American City*. "If the necessary capital is not in hand there are only three ways of obtaining it—by borrowing it, stealing it, or sweating it out of the people."

Today, Big Steel's corporate descendants would like to shed the history, says Carlino—as did, until recently, many of Pittsburgh's residents. "That's why we're here," he says.

Rivers of Steel has a multi-pronged strategy. Staffers sponsor ethnographic surveys, class programs, field trips, hands-on activities for school groups, and public tours. The Bost Building, a union headquarters and lookout point during the strike debacle, has been refurbished as a visitor center and repository—with exhibit space, 12,000 slides, over 200 videos, a reference library, and thousands of oral histories, maps, and blueprints. Rivers of Steel has also produced the region's signature Omnimax film, a DVD series, and *Routes to Roots*, a tour book of all-things ethnic, be it toe tapping to button-box polka or pit-stopping for stuffed cabbage (*holupki* in Slovakian, *sarma* in Serbo-Croatian). A folklife center helps schools with programs, gives guidance to tradition bearers, and advises communities.

But the hope for the national park lies with a rusting hulk across the river, the shuttered Carrie Furnace complex, a potential museum. Tomorrow, ex-workers will guide the first "hard hat tour."



Left: **Scene from Pittsburgh's South Side, an early success for the preservation movement and the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, which assisted with this recent mural on East Carson Street, anchor of a National Register district.** **Right:** **The neon is always lit at Jack's, open 365 days a year, recalling when South Side bars welcomed patrons any time, day or night. Workers often marked the end of a shift with a trip to one of the many watering holes.**

"WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW LIMITED STRETCHES, OUR FOUR RIVER VALLEYS are hideous infernos of mills, intermixed with a tangle of warehouses, railroads, and highways," writes Arthur Ziegler in the first edition of *Pittsburgh's Landmark Architecture*, published in 1967. "The intermediate hillsides above the rivers are frequently littered with cheap 19th century workers' housing that has now often become hopelessly decayed. Behind these march the ranks of Edwardian houses, dull and staid, and spreading ruthlessly over the back hills are the new suburbs with all their monotony and indifference to their sites."

Today, from his elegant suite at historic Station Square, Ziegler looks out across the Monongahela at the grandeur of the city skyline. It's a different picture than four decades ago, thanks in good measure to the organization over which he presides, the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, one of the country's most innovative preservation groups. Scattered about the room are books and brochures on preserving the world's great cities.

What's the key to success, I ask. "This is a practical town, where work counts, and we've been a very reliable organization," he says. "We're economically minded. When we say to a funding source or governmental entity we will do this or that, we are known to do it, on time and on budget. But we're married to our principles."

Over its first 15 years, the foundation focused on advocating against demolition, saving landmarks, and restoring neighborhoods, launching programs with funds for preservation loans and community reinvestment. "We stopped a great deal of the proposed demolition," Ziegler says. "But we didn't do it alone. We organized neighborhood groups, we joined forces with others in trying to educate people."

In the mid-1970s, the foundation broke new ground with commercial revitalization on a large scale. The redevelopment of Station Square, proof that preservation could be integral to development, offered an antidote to urban renewal. "The one principle we've always had is not to simply say no," says Ziegler. "In those instances where we take a different point of view, we present an alternative—often less disruptive and less costly." By the mid-1960s, the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad complex—the target of an urban renewal scheme—consumed a large slice of the South Side shoreline. In a region of spectacular river vistas, industry usually usurped water access. The foundation, seeing the chance to show the potential of unused waterfronts, reached an agreement with the railroad for a business, retail, and cultural center on 50 acres. A daring departure from official planning, it was also early evidence of the efficacy of the federal preservation tax credit, still key here, notably in the recent reuse of the Heinz and Armstrong Cork factories and Fulton Building.

"If we've been successful at anything it is that we've infused ourselves throughout the community," Ziegler says. "We're looked upon as a resource, an advocate, a problem solver, a source of knowledge. We try to help others do preservation rather than do it ourselves."

The Renovation Information Network, a program of the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh, helps owners of historic houses undo the modernizing fad of the 1950s and 1960s, described evocatively in the fourth edition of *Pittsburgh's Architecture*: "In a masonry neighborhood like Shadyside, the procedure was to take off the porch, patch up the scars more or less, and paint everything else gray or beige or pale green. Or impart a Californian touch, with pebbles instead of grass." The network promotes preservation with a delightful illustrated guide to the city's architectural styles, and by providing for design consultations with homeowners looking to renovate.

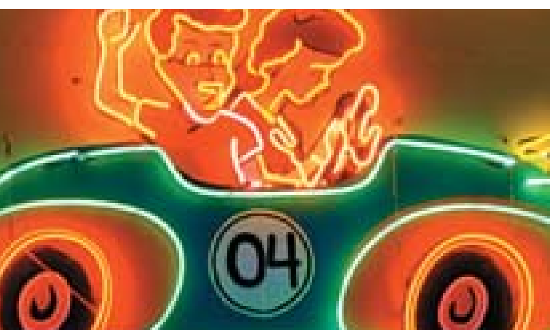
"Today there's a good attitude toward preservation, but it's often erased in the specifics," Ziegler says. "The downtown buildings—everyone says let's save them. Then they say, 'But this one could go.' It comes down to controls. And those controls have to be with us. Politics changes every day. Easements don't." For many years, he says, the city's leadership wanted to erase the steel heritage. "The city was known around the world as a steel center. We should have saved one of the mills as a great museum. Instead, they were obliterated." Education starts at home, Ziegler says, handing me evidence—a book of children's artwork published by the foundation. "A class of kids is given photographs of architectural details in their neighborhood, which they have to go find, sketch, and write a poem about, pretending to be the item. They may have never heard anything good about where they live, then they get to looking in a completely different way. They tell their parents and teachers how wonderful these buildings are. It builds a sense of pride."

TODAY, THOUGH RIDES HAVE BEEN ADDED, THE HISTORIC CORE REMAINS. THAT INCLUDES THREE WOODEN COASTERS BY MASTER DESIGNER JOHN MILLER, A 1926 HAND-CARVED DENTZEL CAROUSEL (ONE OF A HANDFUL STILL INTACT, RESTORED RECENTLY BY IN-HOUSE ARTISTS), AND THE LAYOUT OF THE CAPTIVATINGLY LANDSCAPED GROUNDS, ANCHORED BY A MAN-MADE LAKE.

TWILIGHT CASTS ITS SHADOW OVER KENNYWOOD AMUSEMENT PARK, a national historic landmark perched on a spectacular plateau overlooking the Monongahela. It's the last day of the season, the place chockablock with patrons. Or should I say, lifelong "guests."

I'm standing at the entrance to Kiddieland, with its old-fashioned lamps and cobblestones recovered from Pittsburgh streets of days gone by. The monumental Edgar Thomson Steel Works—one of the few operational—looks on from across the river, through the diminutive Olde Kennywood Railroad and the draping limbs of oaks and maples.

"Little patrons of Kiddieland rides are going through the kindergarten of park patronage," second-generation owner Brady McSwigan said in 1947. "And their loyal support remains as they grow up and 'graduate' to the larger flat rides and coasters." It's a family kind of place, director of public relations Mary Lou Rosemeyer tells me, herself a "graduate."



Kennywood, in family hands for over a century, is one the few surviving parks of its kind. "Had we modernized, Kennywood would have been a small player in a big market," Carl Hughes, a former park chairman, explained. "So, for competitive reasons, we decided to sell the park as an alternative." Today, though rides have been added, the historic core remains. That includes three wooden coasters by master designer John Miller, a 1926 hand-carved Dentzel carousel (one of a handful still intact, restored recently by in-house artists), and the layout of the captivatingly landscaped grounds, anchored by a manmade lake.

The NHL nomination yields the story of the park. Charles Kenny and son Thomas prospered mining coal on the property, which had a stream, surrounded by shade trees, that drew picnickers. In 1898, Kenny's Grove—as it was called—was leased to the Monongahela Street Railway, rechristened Kennywood by part owner Andrew Mellon. Promotions touted the pastoral and thrilling destination at the end of the rail line. The twisty-turny jaunt flirted with a cliff edge along the river, the industrialized valley alight at night with the fire of blast furnaces. In 1917, owner Andrew McSwigan wrote to a colleague: "Cleanliness is our motto and the World knows just what a job we have in our location to fight ore, dust and smoke from the surrounding mills. [But] we're hoping for plenty of smoke this summer. The more dirt we have dumped on us, the more money we take in."

Kennywood was soon a magnet for picnickers from corporations, schools, religious organizations, labor unions, and ethnic groups. The gathering of the Scottish clans was the first large nationality get-together. The Serbians, Russians, Slovaks, Carpathians, Irish, Hungarians, Polish, Croatians, and Italians followed. The year 1919 saw the biggest picnic to date, hosted by Carnegie-Illinois Steel and the Duquesne community. Over 30,000 people feasted on 12,000 pounds of meat, consumed coffee from two 500-gallon tanks heated by a huge fire of railroad ties, and witnessed the roasting of a 1,000-pound ox.

Innovation drove the success of the park, which earned a reputation as a coaster capital. Attendance nearly doubled in the 1920s. Carnival week capped the year 1929 with three circus acts, fireworks, and Mardi Gras dancing to Whitey Kaufman and his famous Victor Recording Orchestra. The Depression saw a fight for survival, with business down over 60% by 1933, the mills ringing the park clean and silent. Roosevelt Day of 1934 was a good omen; business turned up. Noah's Ark—one of the signature rides, its exterior still intact—was christened the same year as the great flood, 1936. A boat and a building, it rocked on a mount hidden underwater, with a rippling floor, a jail whose rubber bars eased escape, and a growling stuffed bear, all to the tune of an ominous fog horn. Screams and shouts were broadcast over the public address system.

During World War II, the defense industries produced lots of smoke, soot, and money. The prosperity continued in the postwar era, attendance boosted by visits from the likes of Lassie and the Lone Ranger (who arrived in an orange Cadillac).

New winds blew in with the coming of Disneyland and its ilk, but the park survives with shrewd management that offers a balance of change and tradition. I witness that equation as evening descends and "guests" jostle for one more ride before season's end.

Kennywood Amusement Park—around the corner and out of this world, a fun and fearsome slice of Americana.

Above and right: **Kennywood Amusement Park, perched on a plateau overlooking the Monongahela River just outside Pittsburgh, is one of the few traditional parks to escape destruction or modernizing beyond recognition.**

two miles of graded trails, it boasts a picnic grove, cliff-faced ravine, waterfall, two streams, three wooden footbridges, and a water garden. Over 2,000 trees and shrubs supplement the native growth. At first the province of renters, today the village is a residents' co-op. Strict review of renovation plans—plus durable brick facades, slate roofs, and copper gutters and downspouts—ensure that the beauty will survive.

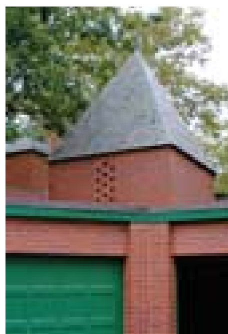
In Ralph Griswold's design for Point State Park, the pinnacle of his career, there was no spatiotemporal mask, but its "ultramodern" exterior was underlaid by rigorous historical research. The park—at the exact point where the rivers convene, this morning shrouded in fog—aimed to convey the natural and cultural history of the site of Fort Pitt, with replica bastions and a fountain symbolizing the cleaned-up city. It was a centerpiece of the urban renewal era. I walk out of the park and into adjacent Gateway Center, another era artifact. The first three skyscrapers built, a matched set, are monuments of industrial primitive, flashing chrome skin with the patina of an aged bumper. As many as 17 of them, all identical, were envisioned. The area is lushly planted, the effect amplified by mirrored windows. Ziegler calls Gateway Center "a disaster," snubbing pedestrians and cutting the city off from the water. The Civic Arena, up the hill that rises from where I stand, saw the futuristic dreams morph into mad ambition, deposing an African American community with a flip-top venue for open-air opera.

Mindy Thompson Fullilove surveys the damage in her book *Root Shock,* interviewing Sala Udin, who grew up in the district and later served as its councilman: "I knew everybody on my block, and they knew me. They knew me on sight, and they knew all the children on sight, and my behavior changed when I entered the block . . . The sense of fragmentation is a new experience that we can now sense, that we didn't sense then. We were all in the same location before. Now we are scattered literally to the four corners of the city, and we are not only politically weak, we are not a political entity."

CHATHAM VILLAGE, A RECENT NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK, IS ANOTHER American classic, carved into a site deemed unbuildable.

In the 1920s, says the NHL nomination, city planning was engrossed in adjusting old street systems to the motorcar. No new town met the challenge until Radburn, New Jersey—brainchild of Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, America's foremost planners of the Garden City movement. They refined their ideas at Chatham Village. Both projects, internationally renowned, helped boost housing standards.

As the middle class sought escape from the city, the real estate market deployed monotonous rows of packed houses on the outskirts. The Chatham Village project—funded by a foundation started with a bequest from department store owner Henry Buhl, Jr.—targeted an even more squeezed group, low-income clerical workers. It was a remarkably innovative era, when engineers and architects, planners and landscape designers worked together. Essential to the project was the art of landscape architect Ralph Griswold—who forged a new interpretation of the role of outdoor space—and architects Charles Ingham and William Boyd. Stein and Wright left their imprint not with forms to be copied, but with a spirit to carry on. Key was an analysis ensuring payback and market fit.



As I stand at the entrance to Chatham Village—erected in phases between 1932 and 1956, a time of intense technological change—I get the sense of stepping into another world. The idea was to evoke the comfort of a colonial village, a return to living in the country. The traditional garb—a "spatiotemporal mask" for the revolutionary ideas—helped sell the tightly packed rowhouses to backers and potential residents.

They are anything but monotonous. The place has the intimacy of a small campus, its alternating hipped and gable roofs playfully stepping down a series of terraces, which accommodate the sloping site, purchased inexpensively. Each cluster of dwellings opens onto an inner courtyard—not a street—which affords a quiet setting for more than 200 families inside a 15-acre core. Cars are kept to the outside. But the architecture remains a stately background to the 10 acres of lawn, 3 miles of hedges, nearly 4,000 shrubs, and almost 500 trees. Six diminutive garden sheds enhance the picturesqueness.

The 46-acre site is almost completely encircled by a steep hillside, woodland uncleared since colonial settlement, a habitat for native plants and animals unique in its proximity to downtown. Laced with

Above: Chatham Village. Some residences are served by outlying garage compounds (left), which planner Clarence Stein said were "found satisfactory in spite of the American habit of keeping a car in the house as some European farmers keep their cattle." There is a consistent vocabulary of double-hung sash windows, French doors, wrought-iron porches, and cast stone coats of arms. Left: Point State Park, a signature product of the urban renewal era, with the South Side shrouded in fog behind the Fort Pitt Bridge.

A MANNEQUIN, NEXT TO ONE OF THE TROUGHS, SPORTS WHAT LOOKS LIKE AN EARLY ASTRONAUT OUTFIT. "THE FIRST WORKERS WORE LEATHER APRONS, OR SOAKED BURLAP TO DRAPE THEIR ARMS, DRAPE THEIR FACES," JAN SAYS. "THAT WAS PRE-UNION. THE SUITS DIDN'T APPEAR UNTIL THE 1950S."

"CARRIE FURNACE IS ONE OF THE FINEST EXAMPLES OF THE IRON SMELTING that made this valley the steel making capital of the world," Jan Dofner—River of Steel's communications director—tells the crowd on the tour bus. "It's one of the industries that propelled us into global leadership."

Andrew Carnegie bought the operation to feed his steel plant across the river. There was a constant drive to increase output. In 1907 Carrie produced 500 tons of iron a day, by 1926 700 tons, and by 1978, when it shut, 1,200 tons. Today, 9,000 tons is the norm at the top plants.

Through a field sprinkled with wildflowers, we pass under an armor-bound bridge—"overbuilt," Jan says, in case of accident. Here "torpedo cars," named for their shape, made their way across the Monongahela, filled with molten iron. Mix water and liquid metal, and you get a catastrophic explosion. The bridge has a long, slow grade. If a car stalled, it could drift slowly to shore.

The bus parks in an empty field, once packed with ore, coke, and limestone for the furnaces. A rail trestle hovers overhead. "The guys hated working here because the elements were in your face," Jan says. "If it was cold and wet, you were cold and wet. If it was freezing and the wind was howling and you had to change something on the trestle, there was always the possibility of slipping on the ice." During one shift someone did slip, a former worker tells us, and was cut in half by a train. As soon as someone could get off an ore yard job, they did.

We walk past a shock of weeds, flashing green against rust, into the complex. It's like a deserted city. There is no movement, no sound. Just dark, echoic caverns pierced by occasional shafts of light.

We arrive at a blast furnace, a daunting 90 feet high. It's a pressure cooker, pure and simple, girdled with "bustle pipes." You pour the ingredients in the top, simmer to 1,800 degrees, then poke a hole in the side with a "lancing hose." Sparks fly, and molten iron shoots out into an open trough, a channel to the torpedo cars. You patch the hole with a big caulk gun, loaded with clay, and go again. There was competition among shifts, and among plants, to see how many pours you could do.

"Everyone had to wear flame retardant uniforms," says one of the ex-workers. "The company provided them—at no cost." He flashes a wry smile. A mannequin, next to one of the troughs, sports what looks like an early astronaut outfit. "The first workers wore leather aprons, or soaked burlap to drape their arms, drape their faces," Jan says. "That was pre-union. The suits didn't appear until the 1950s." The ex-worker adds, "It smelled awful, but the money wasn't bad."

Accidents were rife. A former foreman says that one time hot metal got loose, frying the underside of his car. "Ruined a new Vega," he says. We file silently out of the plant.

"PITTSBURGH STARTED BLEEDING POPULATION IN THE 1950S," SAYS EDWARD Muller, noted historian and Rivers of Steel chairman. "The bloodletting ended in the mid-'90s, but there's still a trickle." Although the city has its share of vacant buildings, the downtown-living trend has boosted the rebound. In the 1980s, Muller tells me, the doldrums saved the riverfronts while the city figured out what to do. People wanted to leave the steel heritage behind; now tourism is on the rise, with hip restaurants and galleries popping up all over. "It's a 21st-century place to live and work, no longer a one-horse town," he says. The education, research, medical, and hi-tech industries are leading the way, Muller adds, with the legal and financial communities not far behind. And a recent battle saw preservationists triumphant, blocking the demolition of 68 buildings. The city is "muscle bound with museums," he says, thanks to deep-pocket foundations funded by the wealth of another day. He cites the "tremendous face" of the Heinz Regional History Center, the Carnegie Museums, the Frick Art and Historical Center, and the Westmoreland Museum of American Art.

In a city known for change, sometimes change is for the better.

For more information, Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is on the web at www.riversofsteel.com, email jdofner@riversofsteel.com. The Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation is at www.phlf.org; the Renovation Information Network, a program of the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh, is at www.cdcp.org, email renovation@cdcp.org. Kennywood Amusement Park is at www.kennywood.com, email PR@kennywood.com.

Above and right: The Carrie Furnace complex.

ARTI
FACT

LONG GONE REMINDER

IN THE REVERED TRADITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD BALLPARKS, PITTSBURGH'S FORBES FIELD WAS ONE OF THE GREATS. Built in 1909, it was among the first made of concrete and steel, signaling the end of the old wooden stadiums. In a city known for its work ethic, Forbes Field bespoke a serious approach to leisure. The exterior was elaborate, the outfield vast. A review of the time stated, "For architectural beauty, imposing size, solid construction, and public comfort and convenience, it has not its superior in the world." **THE STADIUM WAS HOME TO THE PITTSBURGH PIRATES FROM 1909 TO 1970.** In the summer of 1921, it was the site of the first radio broadcast of a major league game. It was here that Babe Ruth hit his final home run. In later decades, a new generation of fans thrilled to the heroics of Roberto Clemente and his mates; Forbes was the scene of one of the game's immortal moments, when the Pirates' Bill Mazeroski hit a home run to win the thrilling 1960 World Series in game seven against the hated Yankees. The University of Pittsburgh's towering Cathedral of Learning served as an observation deck for fans on the outside (pictured). **AT THE DAWN OF THE 1970S, SEISMIC CHANGES IN THE STEEL INDUSTRY WERE UNDERWAY,** and Pittsburgh faced an uncertain future. Almost as a ritual goodbye to the past, Forbes Field was demolished, replaced with a high tech arena with Astroturf at the confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers. Three Rivers Stadium was part of the multi-purpose megastadium wave of the 1970s. **LIKE FORBES, THESE GIANTS WERE EVENTUALLY CONSIDERED OBSOLETE,** most demolished for parks trying to recapture the character of the old fields. As a reminder of a time long gone, parts of Forbes Field have been preserved. The flagpole, home plate, and parts of the ivy-covered outfield walls remain on what is now the University of Pittsburgh campus.

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"The collection, like the park, is a narrative of the Nez Perce experience, the objects invested with a meaning that transcends form and function. From the tribe's perspective, the artifacts are a living part of the culture. They express what it means to be Nimiipuu, as the Nez Perce call themselves." **—from "Objects of Life," page 8**