

SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SIGNALS

LII No. 7

April 2025

Thurs., April 24, 2025 @ 7pm @ The Lindsay Theater



RETURN TO DAK TO
A film by Christopher Upham

EXPLORING HISTORY THROUGH FILM WITH THE SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE LINDSAY THEATER

FEATURING: RETURN TO DAK TO
(2015)

DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2025 @ 7:00 PM

No. 3

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR (1955 - 1975)

Sat., April 26, 2025 @ 9am - 1pm @ OSPOB

SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INVITES YOU TO:

**SEWICKLEY
ANTIQUE
APPRAISAL
AND DONATION
DAY**

GET AN APPRAISAL!
DONATE ITEMS!
EXPLORE SVHS!

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SAT., APRIL 26, 2025 9:00AM - 1PM
200 BROAD STREET, SEWICKLEY, PA.

The mission of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society is to promote interest in and to record, collect, preserve, and document the history of the Sewickley Valley.

Events Soon in Bloom!

"Lights, Camera, History!" No. 3 - Thurs, April 24, 2025 at 7pm



Join SVHS at the Lindsay Theater for the last 2025 screening in our new series of programming -- "Lights, Camera, History!" where we join the Lindsay Theater in exploring history as it is portrayed and preserved through film.

The third film in the series commemorates the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War -- the 2015 documentary *Return to Dak To*.

After the film, stay for a special Q & A session with the film's writer and director Christopher Upham.

Use the QR code to learn more and purchase tickets.



About the film: It was 1969 and American combat operations in Kontoum province were ostensibly over. But not for 600 men in the 299th Engineer Battalion. In a gambit ordered by President Nixon, this battalion of bridge and road builders was left at their strategic post along the Ho Chi Minh

Trail to lure the North Vietnamese Army into battle. During a grueling 61-day siege, without their infantry to defend them, half of the men in the 299th were killed or wounded. Christopher Upham survived the siege at Dak To. But 40 years later, he still wakes up with the weight of Vietnam. In an effort to finally come to terms with his 14-month tour of duty in Vietnam and the abandonment at Dak To, Upham reconnects with his unit. Five of them decide to return to Dak To. With the trust of a fellow soldier, and the voice of a true insider, Upham leads his comrades back to Dak To, along the way questioning what they were asked to do, and what they agreed to do, for their country.

SEWICKLEY ANTIQUE APPRAISAL AND DONATION DAY SAT. 4.26.2025

What is your item worth? Get an Appraisal: SVHS will welcome professional antique appraisers -- including Sewickley Valley's own John Kroeck -- and invites guests to have items from their personal collections appraised. For a suggested donation that will directly support SVHS, attendees are invited to bring 1- 3 items to be appraised in a small-scale, hometown version of "Antiques Roadshow." Suggested donation for one item is \$10 and \$20 for up to three items. Please note -- appraisals are for personal use and reference. Written appraisals can be provided upon request with suggested donation. Items appraised at the event are not eligible for immediate donation to SVHS.

Donate: Members of the community are encouraged to bring items related to the history of the Sewickley Valley to donate to SVHS for inclusion in their collection and archives. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to evaluate and process the donations and prepare them for possible accession into the Collections at SVHS. Post-WWII materials encouraged! Help us bring our collection up to the 21st century -- your stories are Sewickley Valley History!

Help us to preserve them by bringing items to donate on April 26, 2025. Examples of items we accept include but are not limited to yearbooks, school photos, letters, maps, blueprints, journals, scrapbooks, ledgers, books, miscellaneous items, promotional items from local businesses, postcards, family photos, etc. pertaining to the eleven boroughs and townships that make up the Quaker Valley School District and the people who have lived and worked there.

Explore: The SVHS reading room and the Old Sewickley Post Office Building will be open to visitors with select pieces from the Collections at SVHS on display. SVHS merchandise and local history books will be available for purchase.

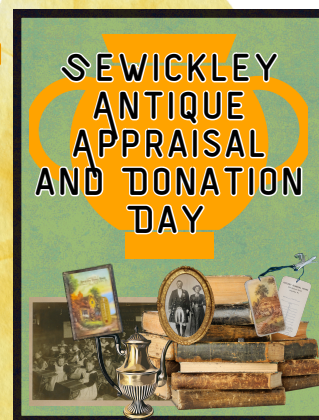
To join us on 4.26.2025 --

Visit the SVHS website at www.sewickleyhistory.org to RSVP. Advance registration by all attendees is requested, but especially by those bringing items to be appraised so that we can manage time with the appraisers. Free refreshments will be available for attendees, courtesy of SVHS.

For more information or questions please visit www.sewickleyhistory.org or contact the SVHS office at 412.741.5315 or info@sewickleyhistory.org

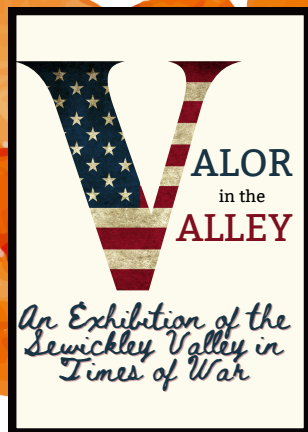
We hope to see you on Saturday, April 26, 2025!

9AM - 1PM



Please use the SVHS website to register to attend. Visit the www.sewickleyhistory.org or scan the QR code above to learn more and RSVP.

Events Soon in Bloom!



VALOR in the VALLEY

Join SVHS for a special exhibition of the pieces of war-time history collected and preserved in the Collections at SVHS.

When the country needed them, residents of the Sewickley Valley rose to the occasion giving their devotion to wartime efforts, on the battle and home fronts. The devotion shaped the area into the Valley as it is known today. Join SVHS in the month of May for an exhibition of the pieces of war-related history preserved in the Collections at SVHS.

A small opening reception will be held Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 7 pm.

The exhibition will run the month of May in celebration of the Memorial Day season with special hours throughout the month. Visit the SVHS website for the most up-to-date information and to RSVP for the opening reception and Annual Meeting.

IMPORTANT DATES AND EXTENDED HOURS

Thursday, May 1, 2025 – Exhibit Opening 7 –9 pm

Access to the exhibition via the SVHS Office will be available Monday –Friday, 10 am until 2 pm, all other dates and times are subject to the scheduled use of the Community Room by Sweetwater Center for the Arts.

Tuesday, May 6, 2025 – Extended Hours 10 am – 7 pm

Thursday, May 15, 2025 – Extended Hours 10 am – 7 pm

Wednesday, May 21, 2025 – Lecture and open Gallery starting at 7:30 pm

Thursday, May 22, 2025 – Extended Hours 1 pm – 7 pm

****Memorial Day Weekend (TBD)****

Saturday, May 31, 2025 – Closing Day, 10 am – 2 pm

Annual Joint Lecture

Thursday, May 8, 2025 | Starting at 5pm
Sheraton Pittsburgh Airport Hotel

The Moon Township Historical Society will be hosting the 2025 Joint Lecture. Be on the lookout for the invitation via mail with additional details.

Join Sewickley Valley, Moon Township, and Avonworth Historical Societies for the annual joint lecture on Thursday, May 8, 2025. Our hosts, the Moon Township Historical Society, will welcome speaker Dr. Carelton Young and his presentation “Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War,” a story of two brothers who fought in key battles – including Antietam, Gettysburg, and Fredericksburg as preserved through their detailed letters. Reservations for the evening are \$50 per person and includes a cocktail reception, dinner, and cash bar, as well as the eternal favorite – a Pittsburgh cookie table. RSVP cards were included in invites that were mailed out. Reservations can also be made by scanning the QR code above.



Joint Lecture

with Avonworth,
Moon Twp., and
Sewickley Valley
Historical Societies

Annual Meeting 2025

Dr. Ian Isherwood (right) will be our guest speaker following the business portion of the 2025 Annual Meeting.



Annual Meeting 2025

Wednesday, May 21, 2025 | OSPOB
6pm SVHS Business Meeting | 7:30 pm Lecture
Doors open at 5:30 pm

Additional details on the 2025 Annual Meeting will be provided in the May Signals, but in the meantime, be sure to mark your calendars for our annual meeting of the membership.

The Annual Meeting will be followed by a special lecture by Dr. Ian Isherwood, a 1996 graduate of Quaker Valley High School, as he returns to the Sewickley Valley to talk about his experiences as a professional historian at Gettysburg College. Isherwood will discuss what it is like to teach history to 21st-century college students and work as a military historian in transformational times.

Refreshments will be provided. Advance registration is requested via the SVHS website or by calling the SVHS office.



WAR SERVICE RECORDS



Shortly after the armistice of November 11, 1918, that ended the actual fighting of the First World War, the Pennsylvania War History Commission began soliciting communities to submit the record, and any supporting materials, of their or their loved one's service during the War for preservation with the state. In January of 1919, the Burgess of Edgeworth received the packet to facilitate the collection of materials that included the introduction letter excerpted below.

"Dear Sir:

I am writing to ask if you will co-operate with the Pennsylvania War History Commission in preparing a collection of materials showing the war activities of your community?

Pennsylvania as a whole, and its separate cities and communities, have played a great part in the War. In many military, industrial and civic activities it has been the banner state of the Union.

It is proper that a complete record of the war work of our communities be preserved, and it is important that steps be taken at once to do this, before the documents and the memories of war times are lost.

Will you not, out of justice to your community, for the benefit of future citizens, take steps to secure the immediate collection of local materials relating to the War?

The Pennsylvania War History Commission has been appointed to act as the custodian of all kinds of documents relating to the War, and it wishes particularly a complete collection of materials from your community and a full account of your many local activities. The files of the Commission are preserved in a fireproof building, and the material is classified by counties and localities, in order to assist future local historians..."

Edgeworth Borough was in the midst of creating an Honor Roll memorial for the members of its community who served in World War I and saw the survey as a way to collect the information needed for their own initiatives.

In the Collections at SVHS are over 40 of the completed and collected War Service records. If additional documentation was submitted with the surveys, it did not make it to SVHS, but the surveys alone are invaluable sources of information, many including a second page elaborating on the service of the person for whom the record was submitted.

The letter from the Commission is as relevant today as it was in 1919. It is proper that a complete record of the war work of our communities be preserved, and it is important that steps be taken before the documents and the memories of war times are lost. With that sentiment in mind, we are borrowing a literal page from history and adapting the "War Service Record" survey sheet for use by the community to help the Collections at SVHS more fully preserve the history of the Sewickley Valley at times of war.

The adapted forms are available on the SVHS website, and at the office, and can be dropped off during office and *Valor and Valley* exhibition hours. All forms and accompanying documents will become a part of the Collections at SVHS.

We hope that you will submit the surveys with not only extended information, like the historical example above, but also with photos or other documentation related to the person, and their service, for whom the survey is submitted.

County Allegheny Town Edgeworth

PENNSYLVANIA WAR HISTORY COMMISSION
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC SAFETY

WAR SERVICE RECORD

Fill in for any member of your family in the military or naval service of the United States or of the allied countries, from July 28, 1914, to date, and mail to 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia.

- Name Watson Black Adair
(Give name in full)
- Home Address (P. O.) 214 Quaker Road Sewickley Pa
(Street Address)
- Next of kin James Adair
Address 214 Quaker Road Sewickley Pa Relationship Father
- Age at entrance into service 43 5. Date of entrance into service July 14 1918
- Branch of service (a) Regular Army (d) Navy. (e) Naval Reserves. (f) Marine Corps.
(b) National Guard. (c) National Army. American Red Cross
- 6a. Service in Army or Navy of Allies—Give Nation and Branch of Service.
7. If in the Army, answer the following:
(a) Department See other side
Infantry, Artillery, Medical Corps, etc.
(b) Name and Number of Company, Regiment, etc.
(c) Where and when located since beginning service. (See point 12 below.)
(d) Rank, with dates of promotions
Name each Camp, Fort or Station. (See point 12 below.)
8. If in the Navy, or Naval Reserves, or Marine Corps, answer the following: (See point 12 below.)
(a) Name of ship, or ships.
(b) Branch of Service.
(c) Exact Rank with dates of promotions.
9. Casualties:
If died in the service, or killed, wounded, gassed or missing in action, give on the back of this sheet date of death, cause of death, date and place of battle, and details concerning casualties.
10. If decorated or cited for bravery, or special service, give date and complete details. (See point 12 below.)
11. Date of Discharge
12. Note: If space after a number on this blank is not sufficient, please note additional facts on the back of this sheet or on a separate sheet. Furnish also, if possible, photograph, sketch of life, war experiences, letters, diaries or any other interesting information.

RETURN TO THE PENNSYLVANIA WAR HISTORY COMMISSION, 1300 LOCUST STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Submitted by W. B. Adair
Address _____

Date 3/22/20
F. 9

Image: The front and back of the completed War Service Record for Watson Black Adair, from the Collections at SVHS.

...vice of American
to 26th Division
near-Seine, where I
sent to the base
from there to
ryed from the
few days to
hospital or
assigned to the
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amped outside
so then in the line.
red dressing
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up Oct 15, 1918 and
at 31st. The Division
established at
d shortly afterwards
Early in November
Division. After the
a division, to
leased and sailed
home two weeks later.



Scan this QR code to be taken to the "Valor in the Valley" event page where the survey sheet can be downloaded.

"Lights, Camera, History!"

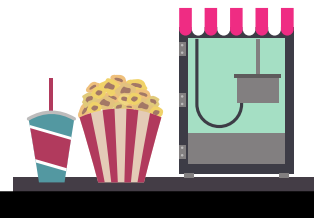
EXPLORING HISTORY THROUGH FILM WITH THE SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE LINDSAY THEATER



As an exclusive perk for SVHS members, SVHS is offering \$1 off concessions per member for those who attend the viewing of "Return to Dak To" on Thursday, April 24. Please only one coupon per member -- two are offered here for each member included on a family membership.



Please cut out and present to cashier at time of payment.



MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Patrons, Benefactors, Friends, Sponsors

Many Thanks to the following who since our last newsletter have supported SVHS with gifts in addition to dues.

- John Orndorff, Jr.
- Zak and Allegra Stark Jones

Special Contributions

- George H. and Susan D. Craig Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation
- Dana (Chip) Whittaker, Jr. in honor of his uncle, Duncan P. Whittaker, Jr.

Welcome New Members!

- Zak and Allegra Stark Jones

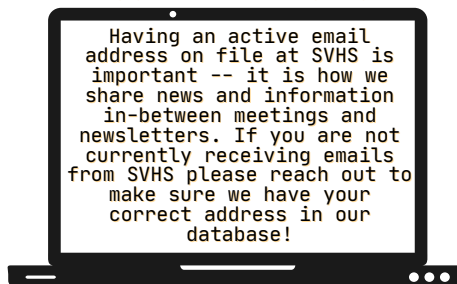
In Memoriam

James Oliver Goldsborough
Margaret "Peg" Sickeler
Duncan P. Whittaker, Jr.

Business Memberships



REMEMBER to SHARE YOUR EMAIL with SVHS!

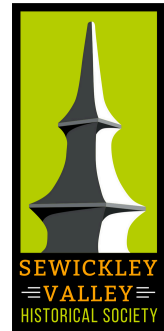


RENEW ONLINE!
USE THIS QR CODE
TO BE TAKEN DIRECTLY
TO THE PAGE



SEWICKLEY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
200 BROAD STREET
SEWICKLEY, PA 15143

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SVHS Nominating Committee

The following members were named to the **SVHS Nominating Committee** for 2024-2025:

Marty McDaniel, Chair

Susan Holton
John Poister

Rob Thomas
Joe Zemba

The Sewickley Valley Historical Society Nominating Committee (listed above) proposes the following members as officers and directors, to be elected at the Annual Meeting, Wednesday, May 21, 2025. At that time, nominations may be made from the floor, provided the person nominated has agreed to serve if elected.

Current directors moving to an officer position in year two of their first-year term:

Robin Bolea, Secretary
Sean Rollman, Treasurer

Directors for a first two-year term:

Alison Conte Palmira Gerlach
Chris Driscoll Dana Merenda
Rob Dunbar Wayne Murphy
Jay West

The election for Officers and Directors of the 2025-2026 SVHS Board will be held at the Annual Meeting.

SVHS Committee Chairs

Archives: John Kroeck

Development: Robin Bolea

Membership: Shelley Murray

Architecture: Teresa Duff

Finance: Ivan Hofmann

Program: Verna Corey

All committees are looking for active and engaged members.
If you are interested in joining an SVHS committee, please reach out to the SVHS office.

Sewickley Valley Historical Society

President

Marty O'Brien

Vice-President

George Berry, III

Secretary

Janet Oellig

Treasurer

Ivan Hofmann

Directors

Heather Blaine
Robin Bolea
Michael Cevarr
Teresa Duff
Will Long
James Mohn
Shelley Murray
Robert Patterson, Jr.
Sean Rollman
Shelley Wygant

Executive Director

Amanda Schaffer

Signals is written, designed, and edited by SVHS Executive Director, Amanda Schaffer.
Visit our website, www.sewickleyhistory.org | e-mail us at info@sewickleyhistory.org | or call us at 412-741-5315.
SVHS offices are open 10am - 2pm Monday - Friday.
Appointments are encouraged.