March 2023

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All are amazing feats of engineering. In the far distant future, say in the year 3000, I have to think civilizations will write many chapters about the historical legacy of Pittsburgh and the hard-working people that helped build much of America. Maybe they'll even talk about our infrastructure much in the same vein that we now romanticize the Roman aqueducts.  On the other side of the coin, we also must not rest on our laurels or take our rich history for granted. We must carry the torch of history lit by previous generations and take care of what has been handed down to us. It is important to remind the engineering community and the public whenever we can about our rich history in civil engineering. The American Society of Civil Engineers is the oldest engineering society in America, and we should be honored to carry this torch.  When I started my term as president, I had several goals I had set for myself. One of them was to reinvigorate ASCE Pittsburgh’s History and Heritage committee. The very first day on the job when I was sworn at the annual Past President's luncheon I spoke with every past president in attendance. I asked each of them what they thought can be most improved within our society. The overwhelming majority of the responses I received that day was to do a better job celebrating Pittsburgh's excellence in infrastructure history and heritage. Including nominating and recognizing more historical landmarks.  Being a bit of a bookworm and history nerd myself this goal was right up my alley. If you ask me what my perfect day looks like, most likely it involves reading a big boring non-fiction history book. Yes, I realize how sad that reads, but it is my sad truth. I have a big stack of Pittsburgh centric science, engineering, and environmental history books that I cherish. Many of which are dog eared out the wazoo. See list at the bottom if you are interested in some of my favorites.  Does this description of a perfect day also sound like you? If so, reach out to me at this [email](mailto:Tom.Batroney@hdrinc.com). I'd love to chat Pittsburgh civil engineering history with you. Perhaps if we can get enough people to respond we can get the ASCE Pittsburgh History and Heritage committee re-invigorated like it so rightly deserves for this great city.  As I write this message I'm reminded of a quote from the great Maya Angelou:  "You can't really know where you are going until you know where you have been."  Ms. Angelo understands that studying and preserving our history is vitally important. Without it, we are rudderless and without direction. If you are passionate about history, I welcome you to join me in getting the ASCE Pittsburgh History and Heritage committee back off the ground. Respond to this email or email me at tom.batroney@hdrinc.com.  Tom Batroney, PE, M.ASCE  ASCE Pittsburgh Section President  **Tom’s List of Pittsburgh/Western Pennsylvania Science, Engineering, and Environmental History Books:**   * [David W. Aitken Jr. "The Little Saw Mill Run Railroad: It's Life and Legacy"](https://www.ronsbooks.com/LITTLE-SAW-MILL-RUN-RAILROAD--IT39S-LIFE-LEGACY--PENNSYLVANIA_p_17816.html) * [Martin Aurand "The Spectator and the Topographical City"](https://www.amazon.com/Spectator-Topographical-City-Martin-Aurand/dp/0822942887) * [Paul H Giddens "The Early Days of Oil: A Pictorial History of the Beginnings of Industry in Pennsylvania"](https://www.amazon.com/Early-days-oil-beginnings-Pennsylvania/dp/B0007DX9DK) * [Leland Johnson "The Headwaters District: A history of the Pittsburgh District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers"](https://usace.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16021coll4/id/165) * [Jill Jonnes "Empires of Light: Edison, Tesla, Westinghouse, and the Race to Electrify the World"](https://www.amazon.com/Empires-Light-Edison-Westinghouse-Electrify/dp/0375507396/ref=tmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1679265918&sr=1-1) * [David McCullough "The Johnstown Flood"](https://www.amazon.com/Johnstown-Flood-Touchstone-McCullough-1984-01-01/dp/B017MYLDE8/ref=sr_1_2?crid=266JPI7VQNFVF&keywords=the+johnstown+flood&qid=1679266091&s=books&sprefix=the+johnstown+flood%2Cstripbooks%2C84&sr=1-2) * [Jim Schafer and Mike Sanja "The Allegheny River: Watershed of the Nation"](https://www.amazon.com/Allegheny-River-Watershed-Nation-Keystone/dp/0271008369/ref=sr_1_1?crid=21N4X70I4OHB6&keywords=the+allegheny+river+nations+watershed&qid=1679265667&s=books&sprefix=the+allegheny+river+nations+watershed%2Cstripbooks%2C83&sr=1-1) * [Les Standiford "Meet You in Hell: Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick, and the Bitter Partnership that Transformed America"](https://www.amazon.com/Meet-You-in-Hell-Les-Standiford-audiobook/dp/B0009UYP5C/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3OHB1A47WEGL9&keywords=meet+you+in+hell&qid=1679265862&s=books&sprefix=meet+you+in+hell%2Cstripbooks%2C74&sr=1-1) * [Multiple Authors "Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and It's Region"](https://www.amazon.com/Devastation-Renewal-Environmental-History-Pittsburgh/dp/0822958929) * [Todd Wilson and Helen Wilson "Pittsburgh's Bridges"](https://www.amazon.com/Pittsburghs-Bridges-Todd-Wilson-Pe/dp/1531678289/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2N3B6Q2QFB3MN&keywords=pittsburgh+bridges&qid=1679266150&s=books&sprefix=pittsburgh+bridges%2Cstripbooks%2C78&sr=1-1) | | | | |