History Center’s #Pixburgh Exhibition Explores Life Through the Lens of Pittsburghers

-PITTSBURGH, Dec. 15, 2016 – Visitors to the Senator John Heinz History Center can experience an in-depth look at the museum’s extensive collection of photographs as part of the new major exhibition, #Pixburgh: A Photographic Experience, which opens this Saturday, Dec. 17.

With nearly two billion digital images taken daily, photography connects generations and remains one of the most popular means of self-expression, thanks in part to popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The #Pixburgh exhibit highlights Pittsburgh’s passion for photography from the early 1850s through today, culled from the History Center’s extensive vault of nearly one million photos. Many of the nearly 400 featured photographs have never been displayed to the public.

Each image featured in #Pixburgh reflects a wide variety of subjects and time periods, from turn-of-the-century mugshots to the 1960 World Series, from the 1936 St. Patrick’s Day Flood to the Westinghouse Skybus, and from early “selfies” to Polaroids, all while exploring Pittsburgh’s cycle of change and renewal.

With images featuring social gatherings and holiday traditions, family dinners and beloved pets, historic events and unforgettable milestones, the exhibit showcases the similarities between the subjects Pittsburghers photographed a century ago to what is captured by our social media-savvy society today.

Exhibit subject areas include:

- The faces of Pittsburgh, showing the racial, ethnic, and religious fabric of our region;
- Famous landmarks, large-scale events, and iconic images of the Point, the Kaufmann’s Clock, and Three Rivers Stadium that help to give us a sense of place;
- Pittsburgh at work, highlighting the cross-section of workers that help to keep the city growing;
- Leisure activities that show how Pittsburghers enjoy their time off, from vacations and holiday parties to cookouts and happy hours; and
- A special area focusing on dogs, cats, and other beloved family pets.

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The exhibit also includes artifacts on loan from the Smithsonian, including a nine lens wet plate camera from the 1880s that was used to take multiple images at the same time and a sheet of uncut gem tintypes from 1870. Both Smithsonian artifacts demonstrate the evolution of lower-priced, faster-paced camera technology, as well as Americans’ ever-increasing love of photography.

Families will enjoy several interactive activities throughout the #Pixburgh exhibit, including an immersive photo slideshow area that encourages visitors to play the role of museum curator and guess the date and location of historic images; a hands-on children’s section where kids can play a special photo matching game; and a special “Through the Lens” section where visitors can gaze through an oversized lens to see images from the photographer’s viewpoint.

Submit Your Favorite Pittsburgh Photos for Display in the #Pixburgh Exhibit

The History Center invites Pittsburghers past and present to leaf through their photo albums, scan their laptops, and check their smartphones to find their favorite photo that perfectly captures their Pittsburgh experience.

Visitors can submit their best image to the History Center for inclusion inside the #Pixburgh exhibit and as part of a special online photo gallery.

To submit your photo, visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org/submit-your-pixburgh-photo.

The #Pixburgh exhibit will be on display through Aug. 20, 2017.

The exhibit is sponsored by Colcom Foundation, the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, The Heinz Endowments, Richard King Mellon Foundation, and the Allegheny Regional Asset District.

For more information, including behind-the-scenes photos and a full lineup of public programs, please visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum is a museum within a museum, comprehensively presenting the region’s remarkable sports story through hundreds of artifacts and interactive experiences for visitors of all ages. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city’s Strip District, and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center’s museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.

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Visitors to the History Center can experience life through the lens of Pittsburghers as part of the new major exhibition, **#Pixburgh: A Photographic Experience**, which opens this Saturday, Dec. 17. The exhibit features this photo of the Pittsburgh skyline from Oct. 21, 1929, when Pittsburgh joined the rest of the nation to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Thomas Edison’s invention of the light bulb by illuminating bridges and downtown buildings.

The photographs featured in **#Pixburgh** reflect a wide variety of subjects and time periods, from turn-of-the-century mugshots to the 1960 World Series, from the 1936 St. Patrick’s Day Flood (pictured above) to the Westinghouse Skybus, and from early daguerreotypes to Polaroids, all while exploring Pittsburgh’s cycle of change and renewal.
From social gatherings and holiday traditions, family dinners and beloved pets, historic events, and unforgettable milestones, the #Pixburgh exhibit showcases the similarities between the subjects Pittsburghers photographed a century ago to what is captured by our social media-savvy society today. Early selfies are featured in the exhibit, including this 1882 image of brothers Frederick and Thomas Gretton, who worked for the J&L Steel.

Though it looks like a selfie taken in the mirror, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette photographer Morris Berman snapped this photo of Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw during the 1970s, likely holding one of Berman’s cameras.

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