



Contact:
Suzanne M. Thinnes
Communications Manager
4400 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412.578.2458 (office)
412.983.9409 (cell)

For Immediate Release

Carnegie Library introduces oral histories of Pittsburgh

Series of interviews illuminate the region's rich history

(PITTSBURGH, PA – August 12, 2008) Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) has opened a window into the past, through a grant presented by the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission. Over the past several years, Senior Librarian Barry Chad of CLP's Pennsylvania Department has conducted and transcribed 42 oral history interviews with residents of the region, inviting them to reflect on life in and around Pittsburgh during the great depression, World War II and other socially and historically relevant times.

Visitors to the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Web site can now experience a different time – a time when going to church meant putting on a hat and gloves, ballpoint pens were new and exciting technology and a knock at the door could be a traveling salesman. After interviewing a local steelworker in 1995, Chad found that every life is a valuable history, every story the key to understanding our cultural heritage.

“These are people who have had very rich and interesting lives,” says Chad. “Even those people who weren't movers or shakers – they all had stories. Everybody's got a history.” The collected stories reflect a wide spectrum of human experiences – life in the Lower Hill, working at Gimbels Department Store downtown or landing on Utah Beach in Normandy. These anecdotes are presented to remind area residents of the region's proud history and encourage them to remember their own experiences living in an area with such vibrant personality.

The 42 collected oral histories of Pittsburgh are available on the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Web site at www.carnegielibrary.org/research/pittsburgh/oralhistory/.

###

About Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Building Communities, Enriching Lives

Established as a public trust in 1895, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh serves the citizens of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County with a distinguished history of leadership among the country's great public libraries. Through its 19 neighborhood locations, including Main Library and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh is the region's most visited asset. Each year the Library provides more than 8,000 free programs, classes and other learning and training opportunities that are tailored to meet the dynamic and diverse needs of people living in Western Pennsylvania.

About Libraries for LIFE

While Andrew Carnegie provided the seed money to build the library facilities; he did not leave an endowment for their ongoing operations and maintenance. Thanks to local, county and state government, corporations, foundations

and individuals, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Libraries *for* LIFE Capital Campaign is renewing library buildings to meet the needs of today's library customer. In 2000 Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh embarked upon a \$55 million capital campaign, the first in the Library's history, to make neighborhood libraries accessible system-wide. Since the campaign began, the Library has renovated or relocated six neighborhood libraries and completed a partial renovation of the Main Library, First Floor. The visibility of the completed renovations has brought new vitality, with all locations benefiting from increased visitor and circulation numbers.