



**FORT PITT  
BLOCK HOUSE**

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**Author James Oliver Goldsborough at Fort Pitt Block House  
Descendant of Founding Members of Pittsburgh DAR**

**Point State Park, PA – July 15, 2014** – Author James Oliver Goldsborough will be at the Fort Pitt Block House on Thursday, July 17, between 11am and 1 pm to greet visitors and sign copies of his books. More than 120 years earlier it was his great-grandmother, Amelia Neville Shields Oliver, a founding member of the [Pittsburgh Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution](#), who penned the letter to Mary Schenley imploring her to save the Block House from displacement or worse, destruction. Oliver asked Schenley “On behalf of our society, to give us this house, and enough ground around it for a small park.” Oliver went on to say in that 1892 letter, “...[The Block House] is a place of great interest to all Pittsburghers, but particularly to our Society, many of whose ancestors were stationed at this Fort during the wars with the Indians and French, and during the Revolutionary War.”

Oliver, in fact, traced her roots back to Major Isaac Craig, the first person to ever live in the Block House and the namesake of the home which stood alongside the Block House until 1894. Goldsborough traced much of his family’s early history, including the Shields, the Crittendens, the Olivers, the Nevilles and the Craigs, all military, political and industrial leaders of their time, in his 2008 book, [The Misfortunes of Wealth: A Family Memoir](#).

James is an award-winning writer with a 40-year career in journalism. He spent 15 years in Europe as a foreign correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune, International Herald Tribune, Toronto Star and Newsweek Magazine before returning to the United States to resume his newspaper career as an editor and columnist for the San Jose Mercury-News and San Diego Union-Tribune. Currently, he writes for the Voice of San Diego, a new on-line daily newspaper in San Diego that has attracted national attention for news innovations. Goldsborough is in town promoting his latest novel, [The Paris Herald](#), which tells the story of the world’s most famous newspaper founded in 1887 but focuses on the key years when the fates of the newspaper and the regime of Charles de Gaulle became intertwined.

Both of Goldsborough’s books will be on sale at the Block House on July 17, along with [The Fort Pitt Block House](#), published last year and written by former curator, Emily Weaver. A portion of proceeds from all the book sales will support the ongoing costs to maintain and preserve the Block House.

This year marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of the Block House and 120 years since Mary Schenley donated the building to the Pittsburgh Chapter. The Pittsburgh Chapter and the Fort Pitt Society have worked tirelessly since then to preserve and protect the historic landmark and Pittsburgh’s oldest authenticated building. “All of Pittsburgh should recognize the achievement of these women,” shared Goldsborough, “and as time goes by and more and more history is erased, their achievement will only merit more gratitude.”

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*Owned and Operated by The Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania*



**The Fort Pitt Block House** was constructed in 1764 as a defensive redoubt for Fort Pitt. As the oldest authenticated structure in Western Pennsylvania, the Block House holds much significance to the city of Pittsburgh and to early American history. Fort Pitt Block House has been owned and operated by the Fort Pitt Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution of Allegheny County, a supporting organization of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, since 1894. The Fort Pitt Society and the Pittsburgh Chapter, NSDAR have worked tirelessly to preserve and protect the Block House for 120 years, keeping it free and open to the public as a historic site and museum. The Fort Pitt Block House is located in downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as part of scenic Point State Park. For more information, visit [www.fortpittblockhouse.com](http://www.fortpittblockhouse.com).

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For more information about the Fort Pitt Block House, the book signing on July 17<sup>th</sup>, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations or to schedule an interview with a representative of the Block House, **please contact Maureen Mahoney Hill at 412-780-4708 or by email at mmahoneycfre@gmail.com.**