



Archives

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WILKINSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
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Lincoln statue “black galaxy” granite pedestal has been delivered to Wilkinsburg!



Two large pallets of granite were delivered to the Lincoln Statue monument site on March 31. These black granite pieces weigh over 3000 pounds each, and will be stacked to become the tall pedestal that the Lincoln statue will be mounted on. Natural granite is an igneous rock which is strong, durable and ideal for an exterior application. The “black galaxy” color was chosen to be a striking contrast to the surrounding gray concrete and provide a distinctive stand for Lincoln. There is no place in North America where black granite exists as a natural stone. These pieces were cut from a quarry in south central India. Visually it is spectacular with tiny sparkling flecks in the black surface, which add to the natural beauty.

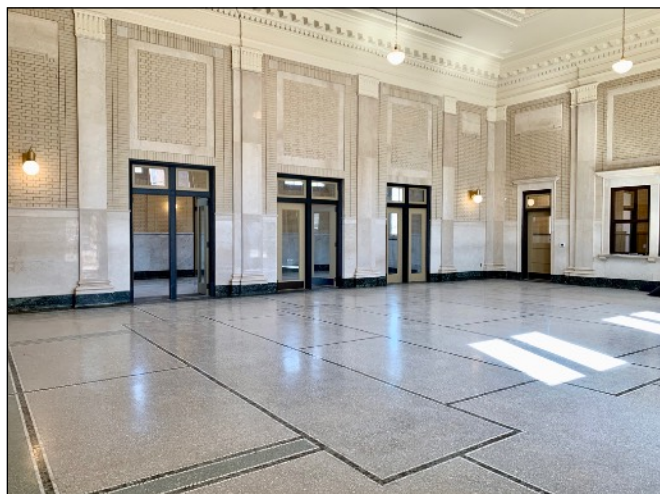
Thanks to all the generous individuals, businesses and organizations whose contributions paid for this granite!

The Lincoln monument area now has the base piece of granite installed for the pedestal. A taller granite block will be set on it, with the statue mounted on top. Abraham Lincoln will stand about two feet higher than the previous statue. This superb viewing area has a beautiful black steel railing along the entire 40 foot length. There are three 6 foot steel benches, along with a matching trash receptacle. This outstanding monument viewing area is part of the Ardmore wall project with funds from a Keystone Communities grant. Many thanks to Borough Council/government, along with State officials Ed Gainey and Jay Costa who envisioned and helped complete a lovely linear park for Wilkinsburg.

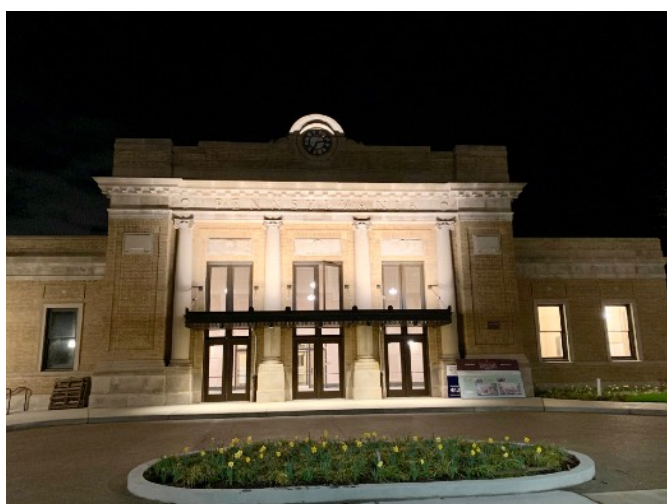


The new bronze statue of Abraham Lincoln, sculpted by artist Susan Wagner, will be installed in the next few weeks. The statue/pedestal funding was 100% paid for by donations from people who care about Wilkinsburg and want to help beautify our community. **Thanks to all the contributors!**

The completion of the **Wilkinsburg Train Station Restoration Project** is rapidly approaching. After fifty years of vacancy, neglect and weather incursion, the century old station was in dire condition. Five years ago the WCDC (Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation) under the leadership of Tracey Evans embarked on an ambitious capital campaign to restore this historic building. Funding came from many sources and the expert restoration began with Sota Construction at the helm. The Wilkinsburg Train Station is now beautiful again. Viewed night or day, inside or outside, it is fabulous by anyone's standards and just about ready for occupancy. There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration in the near future.



The spacious main room of the train station now features a newly restored terrazzo floor. Much of the 1916 floor was still in restorable condition, but other parts were badly cracked or missing altogether. Expert restoration, along with some areas of new terrazzo, was achieved with the knowledge of Allegheny Installations and their crew of skilled craftsmen. Walking through the area, it is impossible to distinguish the century old terrazzo from the new repairs.



Wilkinsburg train station seems to glow at night, illuminating the beautiful architecture. This historic restoration with attention to detail has created the most eye-catching building in the Borough. Very soon there should be a grand opening, ribbon cutting celebration.

1912 Allegheny County League Baseball Pennant Winning team - Wilksburg!



This photo is labelled “Wilksburg B.B Team, County League, Pennant Team 1912. The Allegheny County Baseball League was an amateur league based in Western Pennsylvania and was organized circa 1889. County communities formed their own teams and joined the new County league. In 1889 the teams were Braddock, East Liberty, Emsworth, Etna, McKeesport, Oakland, Pittsburgh-Recreation, Riverside, and Sewickley. Historical records don’t show schedules for 1890. In 1891 the participating teams were Bridgeville, Mansfield, McKeesport, Pittsburgh-Climax, Pittsburgh-East End, and Tarentum. The first mention of Wilksburg was in 1892 when the teams were Mansfield, Pittsburgh-East End, Sewickley, Tarentum and Wilksburg. Very little information is readily available about the County Baseball League from a century ago, but apparently the League did exist for at least twenty-five years.

Historic Civil War artifacts have been hidden in plain sight!



Historic Civil War artifacts have been hidden inside the stairwell display case of the Borough Building. On view for nearly eighty years the GAR post 548 Wilksburg display showed a late 1890s American flag, GAR chapter flag, banner and four sabers. Recently the large display case was opened to remove the contents to initiate preservation techniques. It was discovered that a number of additional items were there, hidden in the recesses of the cabinet. Additional items included a Civil War Union cap, an original 1860s canteen, cap box with cartridges, several rifles and a Bible. Jody Guy, CEO of the non-profit Center for Civic Arts, has successfully secured a preservation grant to have the flags and fabric banners analyzed and professionally preserved. These items are temporarily in the care of a conservator.

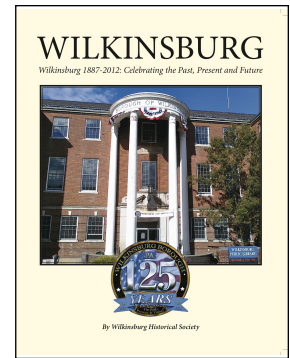
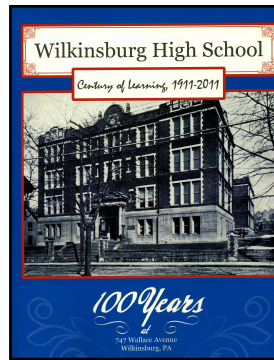
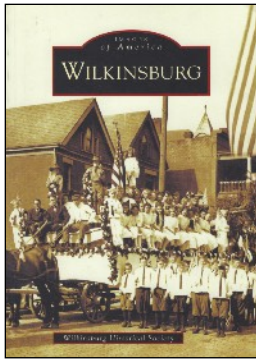
Hosanna House, (formerly Horner Junior High School) hosted a Covid-19 vaccine event.



Saturday, March 27, 2021 Hosanna House at 807 Wallace Avenue in Wilkinsburg became the host site for Covid-19 vaccination of 1000 local residents. A festive party atmosphere, complete with balloons and snacks, greeted those who pre-registered for the opportunity to receive the vaccine. Arranged by UPMC and staffed by numerous volunteers and professionals, the entire process was well organized and ran very smoothly. Much of the credit for the successful vaccine clinic goes to the Wilkinsburg Sanctuary Project, Wilkinsburg ministers, the Community Vaccine collaborative and especially Janet Hellner-Burris, Pastor of the Christian Church of Wilkinsburg and Thomas Mitchell of Covenant Church of Pittsburgh. A great opportunity to create a healthier Wilkinsburg!

The location for the Covid-19 vaccine clinic was Hosanna House, formerly the Horner Junior High School. This beautiful buff colored brick structure was built in 1917, replacing the earlier Horner School which had burned down in 1916. After nearly seventy years of educating young teenagers, the building was shuttered in 1985 due to declining enrollment in the Wilkinsburg School District. The Junior High students were then transferred to the Wilkinsburg High School to continue their education. In 1990 the building was sold to Covenant Church of Pittsburgh. Following the amazing vision of Founding CEO Leon E. Haynes, III, the building was remodeled and updated to become a multi-functional community center known as Hosanna House. Now, after thirty years of service to the Wilkinsburg community, the 125,000 square foot facility continues to provide health and a variety of human services to over 40,000 people per year.

It was the first time in its century of existence that the school building served as a mass vaccination clinic. Hosanna House has always served Wilkinsburg and beyond in whatever way is needed. As Leon Haynes, III stated, "There is something about the building, this place...it is in the center of the community and stands like a beacon proclaiming that hope is alive."



These are the three books that the **Wilkinsburg Historical Society** wrote and published during the past twelve years. They help to promote and preserve the history of Wilkinsburg and raise funds for the various projects of the Society. All three books are still available to purchase from the Society. Another way to support the activities of the Historical Society.

On the far left is ***"Images of America - Wilkinsburg"***, a 128 page soft-bound book printed by the Arcadia Publishing Company. It includes over 220 black and white photos depicting the history of our town from the early land patents in the late 1700s up to the 75th celebration of Wilkinsburg in 1962. The book is available from the Wilkinsburg Historical Society for \$20.00, plus \$3.00 for shipping.

The middle book above is ***"Wilkinsburg High School - Century of Learning 1911-2011"***. This book chronicles the history of the local high school from its early start in the late 1880s, the creation of the magnificent structure in 1910, and each decade since with highlights of the events that were important in the lives of the students and the Wilkinsburg community. For over 100 years the Wilkinsburg High School served the Borough of Wilkinsburg students and this book has several hundred photos showing much of this important history. This *Century of Learning* book is available from the Wilkinsburg Historical Society for \$15.00, plus \$3.00 for shipping.

The book on the far right is ***"Wilkinsburg - 1887-2012, Celebrating the Past, Present and Future"***. This book was produced by the Historical Society in 2012 to recognize the 125th anniversary of Wilkinsburg's incorporation as a Borough. This soft-bound book has 196 pages and includes chapters on the history of Wilkinsburg, the celebrations from the past, information about Wilkinsburg's government, and all the events that occurred during the 125th celebration. There are several chapters about the clubs and organizations in Wilkinsburg as well as the churches and worship centers in the Borough. The "future of Wilkinsburg" section recognizes advertisers and sponsors who helped to fund the creation and printing of the book. This book, originally \$15.00, is now available for \$10.00, plus \$3.00 for shipping.

Make check or money order payable to: **Wilkinsburg Historical Society**

Orders can be mailed to: Wilkinsburg Historical Society, P.O.Box 17252, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Images of America - Wilkinsburg (\$20.00 + \$3.00) = \$23.00 Quantity_____ Total _____

Century of Learning 1911-2011 (\$15.00 + \$3.00) = \$18.00 Quantity_____ Total _____

Wilkinsburg 1887-2012 (\$10.00 + \$3.00) = \$13.00 Quantity_____ Total _____

Name_____ Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip _____



Don't miss out on **The Wilkinsburg Sun**, a free monthly community newsletter published by the volunteer Wilkinsburg Community Newsletter Board, with the support of the Wilkinsburg Borough, the Wilkinsburg School District, the Wilkinsburg Chamber of Commerce and the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation. The Sun accepts submitted articles provided they are related to Wilkinsburg and are civic-minded. <https://wilkinsburgsun.wordpress.com> Sign up to receive The Sun by email at eeurl.com/v0iBP and friend The Sun on Facebook.

Wilkinsburg Historical Society has a website, to share more information about the history of Wilkinsburg. wilkinsburghistory.wordpress.com

Mailing address: **Wilkinsburg Historical Society, P.O. Box 17252, Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

We usually meet on the third Monday of months March, June, August and November at the South Avenue United Methodist Church in Wilkinsburg. HOWEVER, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED EVERYTHING AND WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO MEET IN PERSON. SAFETY IS OUR UTMOST CONCERN AND NEW PROTOCOLS HAVE NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED. THERE IS NO DATE YET TO RESUME IN-PERSON MEETING. The "Archives" Historical Society newsletter is still published monthly, March through November.

Wilkinsburg Historical Society yearly dues for the Wilkinsburg Historical Society are:

\$20.00 INDIVIDUAL Member, \$35.00 FAMILY Membership

\$10.00 STUDENT or ASSOCIATE Members (for out of towners who usually can't attend meetings) Please keep your membership dues up to date.

Wilkinsburg Historical Society - Membership application Help promote the valuable history of Wilkinsburg.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail address _____

() \$20 Individual membership

() \$35 Family membership

() \$10 Student or associate membership

() \$ _____ Additional donation

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Anytime is a good time to pay your dues for the Wilkinsburg Historical Society. We have many preservation projects going on, plus the cost of sending out the Archives and providing displays for Wilkinsburg events. Many thanks to those of you who have already sent in your membership dues. Please use the address on the form, our PO box.