



# Archives

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WILKINSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 27, ISSUE 3

**Black galaxy granite pedestal is being prepared to support the Lincoln statue.**



The second tier of the new granite pedestal is being prepared to hold the support rods for the bronze Lincoln statue. Special techniques and tools are used for drilling granite. In this image, a granite specialist is drilling the rod receptacles while Historical Society president Anne Elise Morris keeps the drill and granite cool with a stream of water.

Current plans of the Wilkinsburg Historical Society are to move the Lincoln statue to the Penn Avenue/Ardmore pedestal during the month of June. A dedication ceremony and celebration will take place in early July. More information will be published as plans are finalized.

*Thanks to many individuals, businesses, organizations and groups who contributed funds so that Wilkinsburg will again have a Lincoln statue standing on the Penn Avenue/Lincoln Highway hill. Your donations are appreciated.*

*As we plan for a dedication ceremony, there will be a program booklet with names of donors listed. It's not too late to be a part of this beautiful artistic installation which honors Wilkinsburg history. The Historical Society is continuing to raise funds to provide a bronze plaque on the front of the granite base. Every contribution will help the Historical Society finish this Lincoln project. Donations can be sent to: Wilkinsburg Historical Society, PO Box 17252, Pgh, PA 15235 or through the GoFundMe that was established. Here is the link: <https://gofund.me/5649b1fa> Thank you!*

TribLIVE journalist/reporter Paul Guggenheimer has been following the Lincoln statue for Wilkinsburg story for several years. The May 6 Trib featured the story updates and can be shared with the following link. (At the time of the interview it was expected to place the statue during June. It now is likely to be the beginning of July.)

<https://triblive.com/local/wilkinsburgs-new-abraham-lincoln-statue-will-go-up-in-june/>.

## 1886 map of Wilkinsburg, the year before Wilkinsburg became a Borough



History matters and your input matters too!

The WDCD, using input from Borough residents, has organized the Strong Neighborhoods committee. Nineteen neighborhoods of Wilkesburg have been identified, each with its unique history and each with some vacant property. The Historical Society is providing brief power point programs for each of these neighborhoods. Pam Panchak-Cohn has provided the following information so that everyone can help shape the future of Wilkesburg:

The purpose of the Strong Neighborhoods Committee is to assist Wilkinsburg residents and neighborhood stakeholders in the creation of a Vacant Property Re-Use Plan.

Between May and October of 2021, twelve community meetings have been scheduled throughout the Borough of Wilkinsburg. Using neighborhood names and boundaries as identified in the Wilkinsburg Comprehensive Plan of 2010, participants are invited to share their thoughts on what makes a neighborhood healthy and desirable, review the maps and data collected by the committee to identify potential properties for projects, learn about resources available, and set shared goals and strategies to address vacancy.

Share your knowledge of your neighborhood, your vision for your neighborhood's future, and how you would like to see vacant properties re-used, re-purposed, or re-developed.

Are there block clubs and organizations with existing plans that should be included in the report? Are there groups working on vacant property projects now? Should neighborhood boundaries be moved or include smaller neighborhoods?

The vision and goals for each neighborhood will be compiled into a Vacant Property Re-Use Plan for all of Wilkinsburg with contributions, feedback, and review from the neighborhood steward & their committees. Collectively these efforts can make a meaningful impact in reducing blight and vacancy and encouraging inclusive economic development in Wilkinsburg.

If you are interested, please go to <https://wilkinsburgcdc.org/strong-neighborhoods-committee/> register for your neighborhood meeting and for more information; or call 412-727-7855.

Please join us in our efforts and help spread the word in your neighborhood!

## Does anyone have a photo of Amzi D. Harmon?



The Wilkinsburg Historical Society recently received a request from a Florida resident, Robert Redd seeking information about Amzi D. Harmon. Harmon served during the Civil War and was a Medal of Honor recipient for his actions at Petersburg. Mr. Redd's research shows that Harmon was born in Wilkinsburg April 18, 1845. He lived to the age of 82. Amzi Davis Harmon died October 9, 1927 in Saint Cloud, Florida.

The Findagrave site explains that Harmon (also spelled Harman) was a Civil War Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient. He served as a Corporal in Company K, 211th Pennsylvania Infantry. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for action at Petersburg, Virginia on April 2, 1865. His citation reads "Capture of flag."

If anyone can assist with a photo or any additional information, that would be appreciated.



## Does the Historical Society owe you a Lincoln bobble-head?

All donations of \$100. or more are offered a Lincoln bobble head as a thank-you gift. We are aware that some of our donors did not receive their gift. (We tried to save postage costs by hand delivering many of these. Some names were missed.) Other donors declined their gift, but may have changed their mind and would like to accept their Lincoln bobble-head. Please send a note to the PO box asking for yours. If you haven't yet contributed, now is a good time, and any gift of \$100 or more will be given/sent a bobble-head.

The contributions over the past two years have been amazing! The generosity of people who care about Wilkinsburg has enabled the Wilkinsburg Historical Society to have a new bronze Lincoln statue sculpted and a large, two-piece black granite pedestal fabricated. There are still funds needed to pay for the bronze plaque to be mounted on the granite. Contributions in any amount are welcome and appreciated. Funds can be sent through the GoFundMe that is set up. Here is the link: <https://gofund.me/5649b1fa> Donations can also be sent to: Wilkinsburg Historical Society, PO Box 17252, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

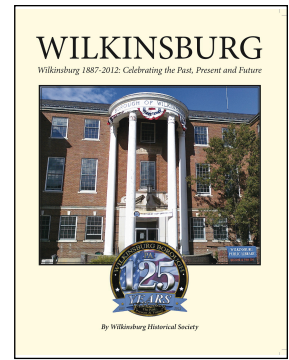
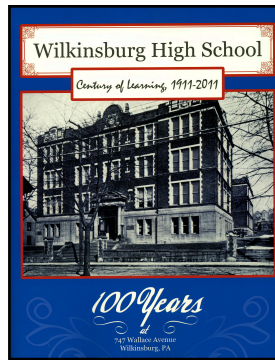
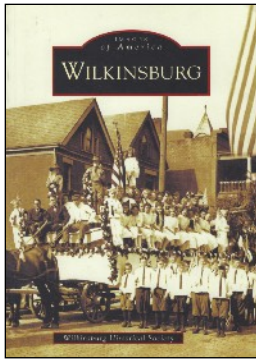
## 1116 South Avenue, as photographed in 1895



This July, 1895 family photograph was recently donated to the Historical Society by Pattie Cruikshank of Belleville, PA. The frame home was located at 1116 South Avenue on one of five connected lots on South Avenue, east of Swissvale Avenue. Wilkinsburg had been incorporated as a Borough for less than a decade at that time. Cement and brick sidewalks had not been placed yet outside of the business district. The Cruikshank family had a wood plank walkway in front of their home. By the early 1900s this home and surrounding lots were sold to a developer and three-story brick homes were built.



On this 1895 Hopkins map the Cruickshank lots were bounded by South Avenue, Swissvale Avenue and Franklin Avenue. The above pictured home is shown as a yellow block as it is a frame home. Brick or stone homes are shown as pink blocks. This map shows the property is the Cruickshank Estate. Pattie Cruikshank explains that the photo belonged to Omar Cruickshank whose father James (1843-1884) died at sea on the Irish coast. Omar's grandfather was William and his uncles were Thomas, William and Joel.



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](mailto: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](http://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

Please make check payable to: **Wilkinsburg Historical Society**

**PO Box 17252, Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

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.