



Archives

JUNE
2022

WILKINSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOLUME 28, ISSUE 4

Open House planned by **Vision Towards Peace** to celebrate new location!
Beautifully renovated facility at 619 Wood Street will host a free community event,
“Wellness on Wood Street - Mental Health Wellness Clinic”,
Saturday June 11, 2022 from 11AM to 3PM
Information, activities, music and tours of the newly redesigned building are featured.



Erica L. Givner and her family have spent several years renovating this unusual, triangular building. It is now a bright and beautiful structure designed and created to serve clients.

Vision Towards Peace Counseling

Services focus is to provide generational wellness one person at a time.

The counseling and mental health service will be moving from current Penn Avenue location to the new one, 619 Wood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Vision Towards Peace has achieved their long-anticipated dream of having a great convenient place to offer services.

The newly renovated building is located at 619 Wood Street and was built in the 1930s in the precise location where Wilkinsburg's train station had been located. After the old station was razed, this out-of-the-ordinary triangular building took advantage of the odd-shaped lot. Totalling nearly 2000 square feet in size, it was originally built to have four small businesses, with addresses at 613-615-617-619 Wood Street. Now, it has been consolidated into one spacious facility.

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Wellness on Wood Street
VISION TOWARDS PEACE
Mental Health
Wellness Clinic
OPEN HOUSE

This is a free community event designed to encourage mental health awareness and connect you with local resources.

Information for the whole family!

11 AM to 3PM

- FOOD
- VENDORS
- ACTIVITIES
- MUSIC

COME AND SHARE IN OUR #GODsizeddream



619 WOOD ST, WILKINSBURG, PA 15221

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Vision Towards Peace

Lower Wood Street in 1916 and 2022



This 1916 image shows lower Wood Street looking north from Rebecca Avenue towards Franklin Avenue. The street had just been lowered and the railroad tracks raised to improve safety in Wilkinsburg. The building on the left side, with the striped top, is the train station and station master's residence. It was no longer needed as a train station, as the PA railroad had built a new one along the tracks about two blocks away. The building was later torn down, leaving a triangular lot for future development.

The white building on the right hand side was built circa 1900 by architect Elmer Milligan who also designed the South Avenue United Methodist Church. For over a hundred years it was known as the Milligan Building. After a renovation in 2007 to create fifteen efficiency apartments, the building's name was changed to Generations.



Same view over a century later shows the new home of **Vision Towards Peace**. When this lavender structure was initially built, it had four separate businesses renting the spaces. The 1939 Polk's directory shows 613 -James Petrone (Barber), 615 - Stephens Florist, 617 - Boden Electric and 619 was Jolly's Beauty Salon.

In the 1955 Wilkinsburg directory the businesses were 613 - Antonelli shoe repair, 615 T.W. Stephens Florist, 617 - James Petrone (Barber) and 619 Joseph Shoe Store.

Although Stephens Florist stayed in the same suite, it seems that James Petrone's barbering business had done well enough to move from 613 to 617 for a larger space.



David Wiegiers and his wife Wendy came to Wilkinsburg from Illinois. Dave spoke at the unveiling of Abraham Lincoln on July 24 2021.

Archives readers and those who attended the Lincoln statue unveiling on July 24, 2021 will easily remember David B. Wiegiers. He is America's foremost Lincoln authority, Lincoln statue expert and the keynote speaker at the unveiling of "Forever Free", Wilkinsburg's new statue.

David has spent many years traveling around the globe to photograph sculptures of Lincoln. Additionally, he and Scott Schroeder have worked to create the

Lincoln Sculpture Project, Lincoln Sculptures Map.

This is an interactive map of the world. Anyone can click on an area, zoom in to a specific area and click on one of the sculpture icons. The information bar then appears at the bottom of the screen to see a photo or two, the artist (if known), the date it was installed, and some additional facts.

David Wiegiers presented his eagerly anticipated Lincoln Sculptures Map on Facebook. We are including it now for *Archives* readers and anyone else to access all the wonderful images.

Here is the information David presented in mid-May.

"After several years of work, Scott T. Schroeder of Bloomington, Indiana and I released, on Saturday, May 14, the Lincoln Sculpture Project Lincoln Sculptures Map.

A LINK TO THE MAP IS LOCATED AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS POST!

The Lincoln Sculptures Project features a map indicating locations of sculptural images of Abraham Lincoln in the United States and around the world.

Sculpture locations are represented by an icon created specially for this project. Users may interact with the map by clicking on an individual icon to access photos and information about each represented sculpture. All photos associated with this map are copyright David B. Wiegiers unless otherwise noted in the comments section associated with each sculpture. Photographic images are not for reuse without permission.

The information in this map is primarily based on the research and photography of historian and Lincoln sculpture expert David B. Wiegiers. The map was developed by and is actively managed by David B. Wiegiers in collaboration with fellow Lincoln historian Scott T.

Schroeder. The map is an ongoing project and updates will be made at regular intervals.

For more information, to suggest a sculpture that might be appropriate to add to the map, or to inquire about permission to utilize the copyrighted photo images presented here, please e-mail:

lincolnsculpturesproject@gmail.com

Your suggestions and feedback are welcome!

Here is the link to the map:"

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1BmUZfnmpyh_4p2Xxgqi5t3sQtNFCSD4&ll=-3.81666561775622e-14%2C-112.64033154999998&z=1)

[mid=1BmUZfnmpyh_4p2Xxgqi5t3sQtNFCSD4&ll=-3.81666561775622e-14%2C-112.64033154999998&z=1](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1BmUZfnmpyh_4p2Xxgqi5t3sQtNFCSD4&ll=-3.81666561775622e-14%2C-112.64033154999998&z=1)

Flowers and Veggies - (submitted by Jack Schmitt)

Does anyone not want to look at a nice flower garden as they drive or walk around town? The land around your religious structure is unique to each structure and it frames the architecture of your building and can either attract or deter people from wanting to stop and come in. Even if your church has no garden area, it has sunshine! Planters attractively placed around the church building can provide flowers. Making your church a corner of beautiful flowers framing a beautiful building will help an entire neighborhood. Absentee landlords might agree to clean up their properties a few times a year and maybe plant flowers. Families looking for a stable healthy place to restore an old house might be attracted by a garden that shows that people here care for flowers. The church can teach what is one way to be a good neighbor by the way it cares for its property. Twenty four hours a day and seven days a week, the church property teaches care and respect as it reminds folks of God's presence. Walk across the street and look at your church property and church building and ask what message it is sending out day and night. Ask western Pennsylvania conservancy for advice for a community flower garden!



Tomatoes, onions and potatoes have been planted at the former Mulberry Presbyterian Church, now **Center for Civic Arts**. The harvest will be donated to the Wilkinsburg Food Bank.

Flowers only need to be along borders and entrances where the public sees them. The balance of the church property might be landscaped with vegetables which would teach people how to raise their own organic food. Some food could be given to the poor or sold as organic produce at farmers market and the money used to restore the church building. Two church congregations could become “veggie partners”, meaning that they would not raise all the same foods so that the local food banks have a variety of foods. Yes, grass looks nice but food tastes better and people remember flowers. Ugly, messy, dirty litter make people avoid looking your way.

Veggie gardening could be tied in with youth groups that learn about nutrition, a class in reading food labels, a class in preparing foods, sharing cooked foods at church events, or even inviting the neighbors to use the church property to grow their veggies. Such neighbors are likely to become new partners and friends of the congregation. One community garden has baskets of food on the perimeter of its veggie garden so anyone can come and take what they need right from the basket, already ripened and picked for them.

How the congregation uses land is critical to show how the neighborhood and passers-by view the congregation's attitude towards them, towards the earth, and towards God.

Some churches have divided up their land into plots with one person responsible for each plot and have a coordinating manager, called Holy Diggers. They have fun and delight in the beauty they create. Then, at the end of the season they have a party.

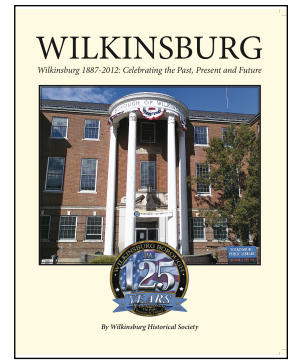
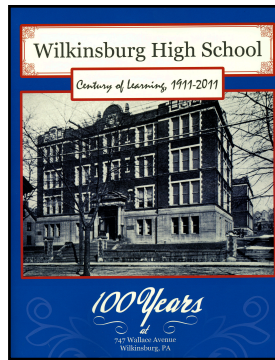
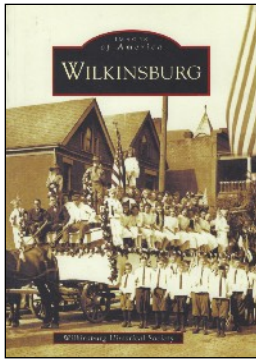
Go-Kart races on hilly Laketon Road in 1930s Wilkinsburg



In this image a crowd has gathered at the top of Laketon Road near Graham Boulevard to watch go-Kart racers ready to start their downhill run. This event was featured on the Smithsonian Channel about American entertainment in the 1930s. It was quite a surprise to see Wilkinsburg's Laketon Road races featured on the Smithsonian channel! Behind the spectators is the Joseph Thomas Greenhouse and Flowers business. Out of view behind the Thomas Greenhouse is the St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cemetery.



Go Kart races down the hilly brick-paved Laketon Road were held in the 1930s. At that time there was not much traffic in the semi-rural area so it was simple to block off the street and schedule the races. Local merchants would often sponsor the carts. This young team was sponsored by Bauman Chevrolet, a major automobile dealer on Penn Avenue. McDonalds fast food is now located on the site that was formerly Bauman Chevrolet.



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:

<http://eepurl.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**

The "Archives" Historical Society newsletter is published monthly, March through November.

We do not publish the Archives during the three Winter months of December, January and February.

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 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, 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.