



Archives

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WILKINSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
VOLUME 32, ISSUE 5

The Borough of Wilkinsburg is Honoring the 250th birthday of America.



Wilkinsburg recognizes the 250th birthday of America by flying two flags, the fifty-star American flag with the thirteen-star circle 'Betsy Ross' flag below it. The thirteen-star flag is frequently designated to represent the American flag used at the time of the American Revolution. Its design is attributed to Philadelphia upholsterer and seamstress, Betsy Ross, but no proof exists that she designed it. However, she is the one who is credited with changing the six-pointed star to a five-pointed star.

The lobby of the Borough Building features a display for the public to see and read. The Wilkinsburg Historical Society has provided a two-panel display entitled, **Birth of America - First 100 years 1776-1876**.

Eight framed items are: Liberty Bell, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, Star-Spangled Banner, Gettysburg Address, Emancipation Proclamation and the Statue of Liberty. Other two panels of information are provided by two Council members.



Liberty Bell was forged in 1753 for Philadelphia as the State House Bell. The bell was tolled July 8, 1776 to celebrate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. It acquired the name of the Liberty Bell in the late 1830s when it became a symbol of freedom and the anti-slavery movement.



The inscription on the bell reads:

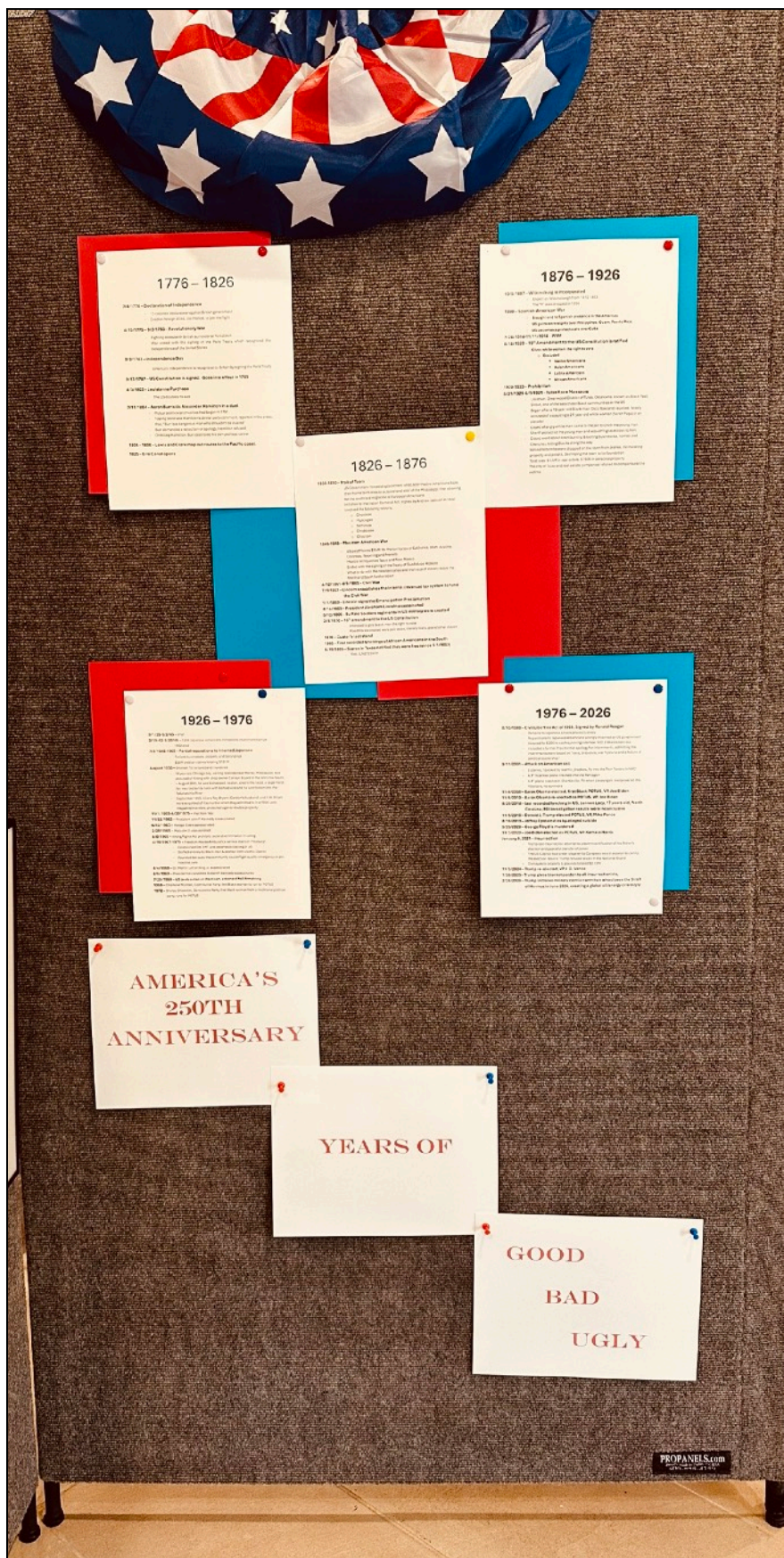
**Proclaim LIBERTY Throughout all the Land unto all
the Inhabitants Thereof Lev. XXV.vX
By Order of the ASSEMBLY of the Province of
PENNSYLVANIA for the State House in Philada
Pass and Stow
Philada
MDCCLIII**

The first part of the bell's inscription comes from a Bible verse from the book of Leviticus, Chapter 25, verse 10.

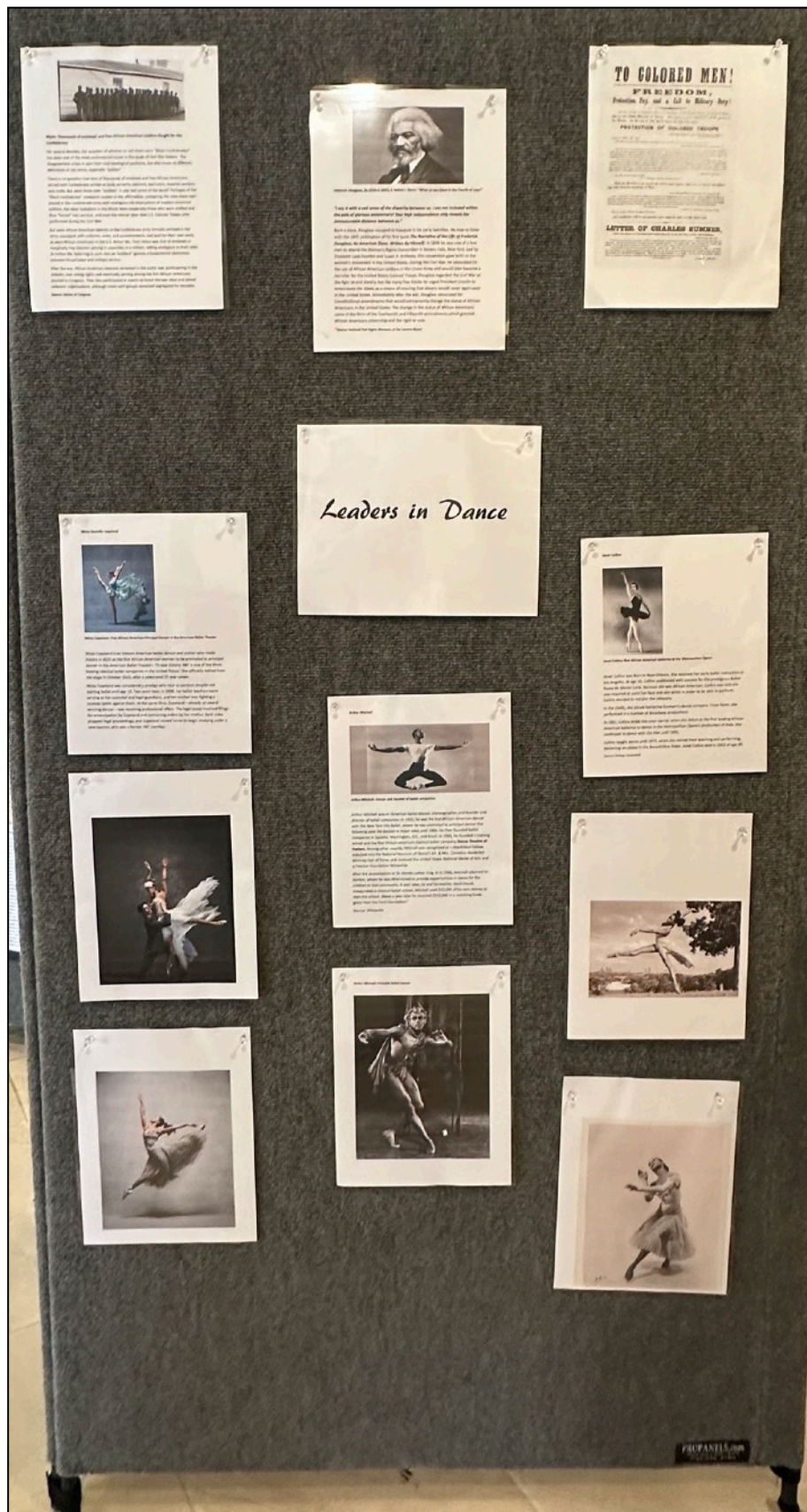
"Pensylvania", with one "n" was an accepted spelling at that time.

John Pass and John Stow were two Philadelphia foundry workers who, in 1753, re-cast the first cracked State House Bell and forged the "new" bell we know today. Their bell ultimately cracked in 1846 and is a reminder that Liberty and freedom are fragile concepts. The Liberty Bell is not only a symbol of the American Revolution. It is a symbol of liberties gained and a reminder of liberties denied.

Wilkinsburg Borough Building lobby 250th anniversary display features a detailed cultural history of America. Presented by **Councilwoman Renee Haynes-Johnson**, this informational exhibit separates United States history into fifty-year segments. Entitled ***America's 250th Anniversary - Years of Good, Bad, Ugly***



Dance has always been an important part of competition, tradition and cultural expression with an especially important role in African-American culture. Dance provides physical, mental and emotional benefits by building strength, balance and self-esteem. **Councilwoman Linda Atkins** has presented this display, **Leaders in Dance** in the Borough Building lobby to showcase historic figures in dance, how dance can tell stories, commemorate significant events and express emotions.



Lincoln Highway Conference in York, PA was a well-attended week of events



The Lincoln Highway was originally established in 1913 by connecting various roads across America from New York to San Francisco. It provided a way for Americans to travel across the country, especially with the increased use of the automobile at that time. Over the years over 47,400 miles of Interstate Highways were created to be fast and efficient ways to travel. However, an alternate route, the Lincoln Highway, can be your preferred way to travel. The Lincoln Highway historic road promotes a slower pace of travel, to get a chance to see the beauty of small town America, stop at the Mom and Pop shops along the way and experience farm stands, roadside markers, historic buildings, murals and points of interest. The above photo shows the group who came to the Lincoln Highway Conference in 2026 to celebrate together and experience side trips to numerous places that showcase America.

You can become a member of this happy group! Visit lincolnhighwayassoc.org

Explore the free interactive map of the Lincoln Highway, read about the history, see the important points of interest. **You can join or renew your membership too.**

In our fast-paced world, this is a beautiful way to slow down and love America even more.



This image shows **Brian Butko** and **Tom Davidson**, two Pennsylvania men who have promoted the Lincoln Highway and made it a significant factor in the travel plans for many.

Brian Butko, Director of Publications at the Senator John Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh has researched and written over a dozen books about Diners, Kennywood, Roadside Attractions, Isaly's and especially about the Lincoln Highway.

Tom Davidson, PA state director of the Lincoln Highway Association, was the main organizer for the **Road to Independence** conference in York, PA. He has tirelessly worked to advance the Lincoln Highway prominence across the state.

inside the Wilkinsburg Sun

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VOL. 19 NO. 10 July/August 2026 A FREE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER BRINGS YOU GOOD NEWS ABOUT WILKINSBURG



Duncan Murray won 2nd place at Popagolongo 2026 at Community Forge in Wilkinsburg June 14. This is the 9th year that Popagolongo, the World Championships of Pop Sticking, held most of its competitions at the Community Forge park area in Wilkinsburg.

Youth Serve Community during Project Peace Week

For one intense week, 35 amazing youth served our Wilkinsburg community in the fifth year for Project Peace. Youth were paid as interns to work in one of six areas:

- 1) Art with team leader Pastor Rachel Niek, the new pastor of the Christian Church of Wilkinsburg. Youth interns painted pictures in response to the vibrant photographs on display at the Adult Art Pop Up on the corner of Wilkes and Wood.
- 2) Construction with team leader Andy Horvack of Hosanna House where the "Tab Plan" secured the deck and built benches at the environmental learning site at Hosanna House's Shomond summer camp.
- 3) Gardening and Cooking with team leader Councilwoman Nicole Santella where interns worked in local gardens, learned about herbs, helped out at the food pantry at Wilkinsburg Community Ministry, set up the first of the season Farmer's Market and created delicious food for the closing celebration.
- 4) Landscaping and Beautification with team leader Lamorne Ross cleared continued on page 7



photos: Chris McGill

The youth of Project Peace Youth and leaders, including Pastor Rachel Niek, and Pastor Jose Velazquez with Francisco Barrios who died.

New Borough Manager, See page 3

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 usually 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.

Contributions are needed for "Lights for Lincoln", to get improved lighting for the Lincoln

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.