



# Archives

APRIL  
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## WILKINSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOLUME 26, ISSUE 3

Contributions for a bronze **Abraham Lincoln** statue have increased substantially over the winter. A new, life-size bronze sculpted Lincoln is estimated to cost \$70,000. There is now over \$48,000 in the fund, all donated by individuals, businesses and organizations who care about Wilkinsburg. Many of these donors have included notes with their checks, explaining their desire to contribute to honoring Wilkinsburg's history and helping to beautify the Borough for the future. **MANY THANKS TO EVERY ONE OF THESE AMAZING DONORS!**



These images show the Lincoln statue site. Left image is from the Penn Avenue side, looking down toward Ardmore Blvd. (Lincoln Hwy.) The right image shows the restored Ardmore wall and the additional interlocking retaining wall which was installed to keep the hillside in place. The Ardmore Wall project is postponed currently due to COVID-19.

The statue will be a beautiful focal point in the Ardmore Wall Park. Contributions can be sent to **Wilkinsburg Historical Society**, P.O. Box 17252, Pittsburgh, PA 15235 or may be given through **GoFundMe Lincoln Statue for Wilkinsburg**. That link is: <https://www.gofundme.com/Lincoln-statue-for-Wilkinsburg>. Donations over \$100 will also receive a Lincoln bobble-head.

Checks payable to: **Wilkinsburg Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 17252**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15235**

Yes, I want to help with a contribution to the Lincoln Statue Fund!  
I want to help create a beautiful bronze Abe Lincoln for Wilkinsburg.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

email address \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \$10 ( ) \$25 ( ) \$50 ( ) \$100 ( ) \$500 ( ) \$1000.

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Other amount **Thank you very much!**

Thanks to those who have already donated!



**UPMC Graham Field** is nearing completion. Chatham University, along with other funders has invested over 3.5 million dollars to provide a state-of-the-art athletic field in Wilkesburg. It has a new electronic score board, lights for night games, and artificial turf marked for soccer, lacrosse and football. The turf has an image of “Carson” the Cougar Mascot in the center of the field. The covered grandstand has been remodeled inside and out. Although Graham Field was first built in 1916, the covered grandstand was added in 1929. It now has a new roof in bright purple, the color of Chatham University for 150 years.

Chatham University was organized in 1869 as the Pennsylvania Female College. Over the past 150 years it grew in every way, and in 1890 was renamed Pennsylvania College for Women (PCW). In 1955 it became Chatham College. PCW was renamed “Chatham” in honor of William Pitt, First Earl of Chatham and namesake of the City of Pittsburgh. Since 2007 it was granted University status and became Chatham University. In 2014 Chatham became a co-educational school. In October 2019 Chatham celebrated their milestone 150 years with a “Long Purple Line” Gala. The Wilkesburg community is thrilled to have Chatham be a major part of our future!



This image shows Dr. William C. Graham, for whom Wilkesburg’s athletic field was named. Johnston Farm property was purchased by the Wilkesburg School District in 1916 to create an athletic field. William Graham championed the idea of obtaining the land to create a large field for local athletes.

Dr. Graham was a key figure in Wilkesburg’s School system for nearly forty years. He was the principal of the High School beginning in 1903, when High School classes were held in various rooms in the district’s elementary schools. (The High School building was not erected until 1910-1911.) He served as Principal from 1903 to 1928. Graham then became School District Superintendent from 1929 to 1941.

Thanks to the Chatham collaboration, the newly renovated **UPMC Graham Field** will continue to honor Dr. Graham’s legacy.

From: Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, March 13, 1949

# Pittsburgh - - - - - Day by Day

By Kenneth Speer

**A** MAN DIED in Wilksburg the other day, but what he did in his lifetime is going to live long after him.

He was Dr. William C. Graham. He had retired in 1941 to two leisure-time occupations—the smoking of his pipe and tilling his garden.

From a country boy he had risen to top position in the secondary education field.

Many of those modern items in the school curriculums of today came from his mind.

He believed in and practiced this philosophy:

That education is a personal matter.

He wanted the system suited to the children; not children to the system.

\* \* \*

**I**T WAS HE who brought to Wilksburg—and, for the most part to Western Pennsylvania—the first modern school building for high school work. He's credited with the home economics course.

He personally supervised the grading and construction of the first big athletic field around here. It's now Graham Field of Wilksburg—named for him.

For 20 years he had no term end examinations; felt it was bad for children's health.

He believed schools and churches to be democracy's bulwark. He pioneered in time-out classes for religious instruction. In 1911 he began daily chapel services in the high school.

\* \* \*

**H**E WANTED MOST to be remembered for that chapel program.

Alumni often wrote him about the reverence they got there—many of them while on battlefields of the late war. Dr. Graham used to say that the reverence he saw in those chapel exercises was something 40 policemen couldn't get.

He believed strongly in athletics. He never was much of an athlete himself, but he saw to it that a strong intra-

mural sports program was kept in the Wilksburg schools.

He was one of the organizers and for 20 years a top executive of the WPIAL.

When he came to Wilksburg in 1903 there were three school buildings in Wilksburg—the high school with 167 students in a part of one elementary building.

Now there are six elementary buildings, a junior high school and a senior high school.

\* \* \*

**H**E WAS high school principal 26 years; superintendent of schools 12 years. He was a charter member of the Wilksburg Lions Club, a civic leader, a good churchman, a Masonic leader and he helped found higher education associations.

Some of the alumni, whom he first taught, are:

William G. Marshall, vice president of Westinghouse Electric Corp.; Richard Kountz, pianist and composer; Maurice R. Robinson, founder and editor of the national high school weekly magazine, "Scholastic"; Alex Ross, artist of cover designs and illustrations for Good Housekeeping and other national magazines; Alice Long, church and concert soloist; Florence Sando of radio fame, and Norman Macleod, a trustee of University of Pittsburgh.

\* \* \*

**M**R. GRAHAM was born in 1873 in Elizabeth Township; they moved to Connellsville where his father died when he was in his teens and then to Mt. Pleasant.

He was in the first high school graduating class there and attended the old Western Pennsylvania Classical and Scientific Institute.

His mother was a school teacher and ultimately his decision to enter the school field came from her.

For thousands who were to come to him later it was a wise choice.

## What is happening with the Wilkinsburg Train Station?

The COVID19 pandemic has affected all aspects of life, and continues to stop progress everywhere. One of the many local disappointments is the work stoppage on the Wilkinsburg train station, just as it was nearing completion and ready for leasing. A recent conversation with the WCDC's Executive Director Tracey Evans as she explained her thoughts on FaceBook. "It is hard to believe that this week was the scheduled ribbon cutting for the Train Station! After years of fundraising, planning, and construction schedules, it makes us sad to think about the celebrations that were planned for this month. A huge THANK YOU to all of those who have supported this project, and we can't wait to celebrate with you one day soon! Stay tuned for an updated ribbon cutting date once we're able to start construction again."

The images below show some before-and-after views of the restored train station. (Photos courtesy of the WCDC.)



This time of self-isolation and quarantine is historic and will be remembered for many decades. However, the kindness and support for one another will also be remembered. The hard-working business people of Wilkinsburg need your support to be able to continue their businesses. The WCDC is keeping and updating a list of stores, restaurants and others who are still open to the public.

From the WCDC:

Please don't forget about the heart of the Wilkinsburg business district—our local business owners and their employees who are being hit particularly hard right now, along with so many others. Order online, purchase a gift certificate, or order food to-go. They need our support now more than ever. The following businesses are currently open to the public, as of April 1, 2020.

### CONVENIENCE STORES AND MARKETS

**Dhales Market**, 811 Wood St., 412.727.6088

**Global Food Pittsburgh**, 912 Penn Ave, 412.727.2624

**Cash Value Market**, 1011 Penn Ave., 412.304.5517

**Right Market Convenience Store**, 1028 Penn Ave., 412.727.1037

**Hanini Market and Subs**, 1105 Franklin Ave., 412.871.3405

**Pittsburgh Asian Market**, 705 Penn Ave., 412.731.8810

**ELS** at 1614 Penn Ave. 412-243-9976

**Wilkinsburg Beverage Co** (outdoor pickup) 601 Penn Ave. 412-371-4242

(continued on the next page)

The following businesses are currently open to the public, continued from previous page:

## RESTAURANTS

**Soul Food Connection** (take out only), 819 Wood St., 412.241.4910

**Wood And Penn Restaurant and Tobacco** (take out only), 902 Wood St., 412.241.4577

**Salvatore's Pizza House** (take out only), 612 Penn Ave., 412.247.4848

**Crabs R Us** (Take out, GrubHub and DoorDash), 764 Penn Ave., 412-871-5740

**Fireside Caribbean Restaurant** (take out only), 796 Penn Ave., 412.243.6344

**Royal Caribbean** (take out and GrubHub), 1568 Montier St., 412 242-5226

**Nancy's Revival** (take out, GrubHub and Delivery) 616 South Ave. 412-242-3447

**Wood Street Bread** (Take out only) 723 Wood Street 412-241-2400

## Other Businesses

### **Knotzland Bowties**

Order products and gift cards online.  
They are also making face masks free  
to the public. Contact directly if interested.  
303 South Trenton  
412-256-8470

[Website](#)

### **James Floral & Gift Shoppe**

Order products and gift cards online.  
712 Wood Street  
412-731-3794

[Website](#)

### **Kenyon Jewelers**

Order online.  
711 Penn Ave  
412-731-6063

[Website](#)

### **Global Human Performance**

Offering a free trial of online  
personal fitness coaching.  
1256 Franklin Ave  
412-390-4557

[Website](#)

### **Fern Hollow Bicycle**

Available for repairs only.  
307 S Trenton Ave  
412-241-4200

[Website](#)

### **H & R Block Business**

Drop off only, virtual process is available online.  
729 Penn Ave  
412-371-5323

[Website](#)

### **Vision Towards Peace**

Appointments available by telephone call.  
711 Penn Ave  
412-241-4673

[Website](#)

### **Pittsburgh FIT**

FREE online fitness classes.  
210 Thomas St  
412-273-0644

[Website](#)

### **Lovett Sundries**

Order online or curbside pickup. All soaps  
are 10% off.  
606 South Ave  
412-204-6866

[Website](#)

### **Meshwork Press**

Orders accepted online, by email or by  
phone.  
315 S Trenton Ave  
412-690-0022

[Website](#)

### **Stanton Electric**

521 Penn Ave  
412-242-9300

[Website](#)

### **MD Autoworks**

916 Penn Ave  
412-241-9626

**Wilkinsburg Public Library** has wonderful news for all Wilkinsburg fans!

A long-awaited resource is now available for anyone with internet access. For many decades the Wilkinsburg Public Library has served as a repository for all types of information regarding life in Wilkinsburg. Over the past few years that information has been saved digitally. Now, thanks to Wilkinsburg Librarian and Acting Director Anna Newborg, it is online. This is really exciting news, as you can now virtually access hundreds of historical documents, pictures, articles and more about the Wilkinsburg Community! Get free access through the Wilkinsburg Library’s website: [www.wilkinsburglibrary.org/historical](http://www.wilkinsburglibrary.org/historical) Ms. Newborg states, “We had hundreds of historical documents about Wilkinsburg on a flash drive at the library that I just finished uploading online. You can access all of it through our webpage” [www.wilkinsburglibrary.com/historical](http://www.wilkinsburglibrary.com/historical)

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Wilkinsburg Historical Society has a website, (currently being revised).  
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 meet at 7:30 PM on the third Monday of months March, June, August and November usually at the South Avenue United Methodist Church in Wilkinsburg. The Archives Historical Society newsletter is 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.