

# HISTORY OF WILKINS TOWNSHIP



The Township then had an area of 34.5 square miles with a population of 1,830. The Township's boundaries ran from the Allegheny River on the north, Thompson's Run and Turtle Creek on the East, the Monongahela River on the south and Pitts Township, now Pittsburgh, on the west. At that time, the Township was crossed by two main roadways called Raystown Indian Trace. The North Fork was the early path to Fort Pitt from Fort Bedford. Many people traveled this road to get to the west. Later, parts of this road became the William Penn Highway. The South Fork ran through the village of Turtle Creek. This road, plus the railroad station that was built in 1851, helped to develop this area. The South Fork later became the Greensburg Turnpike.

One of the early settlers was Christopher Linhart, who settled along the areas between Thompson and Chalfant Runs. A log cabin built by the Linharts in 1782 is still standing after 237 years. The Perchmonts operated a stagecoach stop, ticket office, an inn, supply store and tavern along what is now Greensburg Pike.

The earliest industry was farming. Much soft coal mining was done during the period from the 1870's to World War I. Early in the 20th Century, Westinghouse built a metal foundry in the Linhart area. As many portions of Wilkins Township grew and became urban areas, separate municipal governments were created from Wilkins Township. These include most of the municipalities in the East Suburban and Turtle Creek Valley areas. The last such creation was Churchill Borough in 1934.

Wilkins Township achieved its present First Class Township status in 1910. The present Township size is 2.75 square miles with a population of 6,350 as of the 2020 census. Even though Wilkins Township is small in size, it is a first-class community and still growing. Wilkins Township has good schools, is close to shopping areas and is near churches of many denominations. It is also served by a good police department and volunteer fire company. In recent years, many new industries have moved into the area, making it a prosperous community and a nice place to call home.