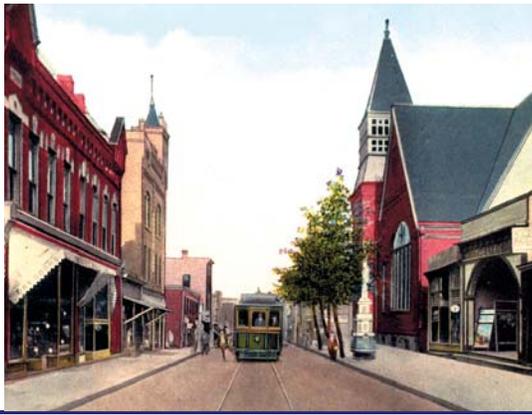


SUMMER 2017

NORWIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY



We preserve our local history, promote the history of the Norwin Community and embrace the opportunity to educate the Community about the people, places and events that comprise the history of Irwin, North Irwin, and North Huntingdon Township.



The Strawpump Fire Department remains today as a symbol of the community.



A replica of the pump is located in front of the Siniawski home on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Did You Know? How the Village of **STRAW PUMP** Got Its Name

By Bob Cupp

From Wayne Gongaware's article, "Straw Pump," published in "10 Score" and Robert Van Atta's article in "Historical Genealogical Vignettes of 8/26/79".

In the old stagecoach days along the Pittsburgh and Greensburg Pike, there was a second watering stop out of Pittsburgh (for horses). A log tavern and stable to hold 20 horses were built at an early day. In 1850, when James Underwood became proprietor, he installed an iron pump which, in cold weather, was encased in several layers of straw to prevent freezing.

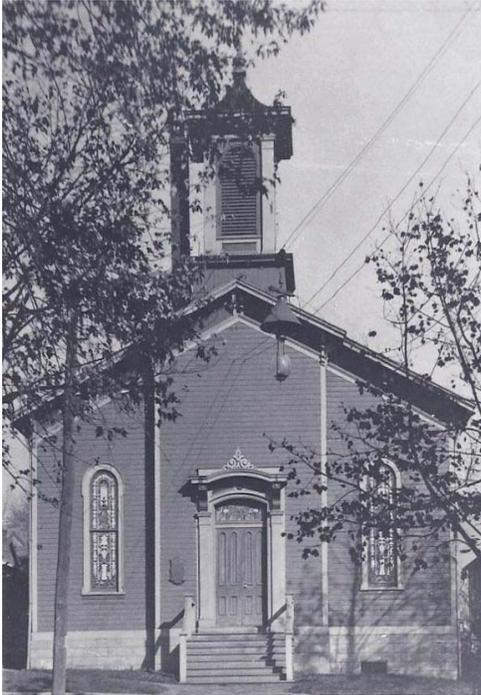
When the trolley line from Greensburg to Irwin was built in the late 1890s past the site, the village developed as a result of the street car providing available transportation.

In 1901, Harry Lauffer was conductor on the streetcar that ran between Pittsburgh and Ligonier. The streetcar stopped halfway on the run at the unnamed village.

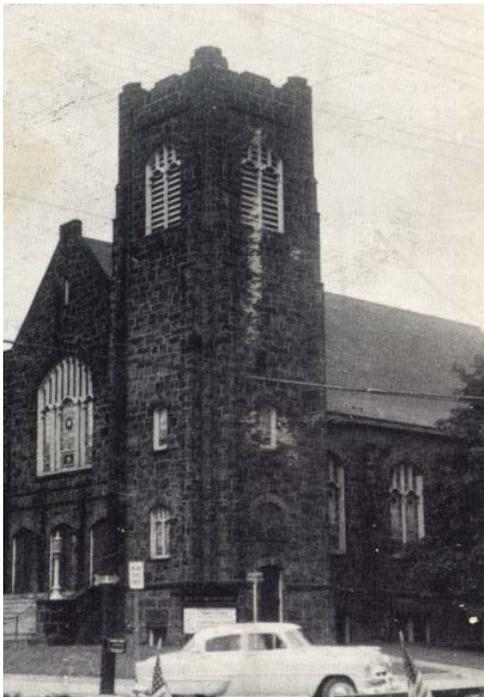
In those days, streetcar conductors would call out the name of each village, as the streetcar stopped. This village's only distinction seemed to be a large pile of straw, which appeared each winter in front of the log cabin inn. One day, Mr. Lauffer asked Percy Caldwell, a resident of the village, what purpose the straw served. Mr. Caldwell explained that the straw covered a pump and kept the water underneath from freezing in cold weather. The next day, when the streetcar pulled up to the village, Harry Lauffer called out, "Straw Pump," and the name of Straw Pump was used for identification from that time on.

Fans of colorful community names are grateful that a 1903 effort of residents of Straw Pump to change the name of their little hamlet to Gongaware Place, Thompson Manor, or some other more dignified name, didn't work.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of IRWIN



The original building.



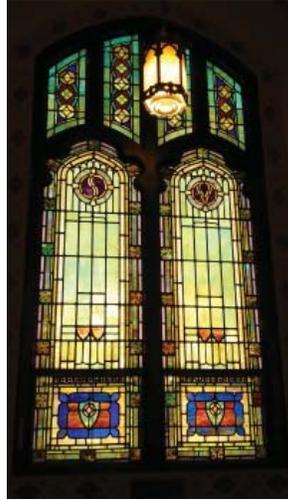
Scotch-Irish Presbyterians moved into Western Pennsylvania and began to establish churches in the late 1700s. One of the earliest churches was Long Run Presbyterian Church, established in 1772. In 1864, Long Run established a preaching station in the in the new community of Irwin Borough. At first they rented the German Reformed Church for bi-weekly services. In 1869, the trustees were authorized to pay rent for the use of an assembly room on the second floor of the Irwin School building for regular Sunday services. On April 25, 1869, the first Sabbath School class was held in the afternoon, and that evening they held their first worship service.

The following year, the congregation voted to establish a new church. The forty charter members made their intentions known to the Presbytery of Redstone and The Presbyterian Church of Irwin was organized on November 7, 1870. The congregation elected and installed four elders and received their charter on March 30, 1872.

In April of 1782, the congregation purchased a plot of land on Main Street and a frame building was built. On September 22, 1902, a plot of land was purchased and a manse built. The next building project began on March, 1914. Ground was broken for the current building on September 20, 1914, the corner stone laid on April 30, 1916, and the finished church was dedicated on April 17, 1917. At that time the charter was amended to read “The First Presbyterian Church of Irwin.”



100 YEARS!



The interior of the church building has undergone several renovations over the years. The original manse is now used as offices and meeting rooms. The organ was restored and the pipes reconfigured in 2000. Most recently, the property at the corner of Oak and Pennsylvania Avenue was purchased for additional parking.

Today The First Presbyterian Church of Irwin is the largest church in the Redstone Presbytery.



The Awesome Holiday House Tour

SATURDAY **DECEMBER 2**

This annual event has been a tradition in our area for over 20 years! It is the Norwin Historical Society's main means of financial support.

The homes on the tour range from **VERY LARGE** and historic to **VERY NEW** and fabulous!

Watch for tickets to go on sale in early November at the Norwin Public Library and Norwin Chamber of Commerce.

YES, there will be a VIP shuttle available again this year!

Cost of each:

TOUR: \$18

SHUTTLE: \$35



PLAN NOW, to join your friends and neighbors to tour these beautifully decorated homes this year!



Norwin Historical Society
PO Box 623
Irwin, PA 15642

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SUMMER 2017



*Come visit us
under the
clock tower
during special
downtown events!*

