

# **LPWB HISTORICAL WEATHER**

**Lincoln Park Weather Bureau began daily observations on January 1983. And of course, there was weather at Lincoln Park before 1983.**

**Following are several of the more remarkable weather events which occurred at Lincoln Park prior to 1983. While quantitative measurements pertaining to these events are not available, qualitative descriptions of these selected events are chronicled below.**

- **1954, Friday October 15: Hurricane Hazel**

**During autumn 1954, construction of the houses in this neighborhood was either recently completed, in progress, or soon to begin. Therefore, trees and bushes were small and not too susceptible to wind damage. Therefore, neighborhood wind damage was rather minor. The Weather Bureau office in Reading measured a maximum sustained wind of 72 mph and peak gust of 82 mph. Hazel was not a prodigious rainmaker as is usual for a hurricane over southeastern PA. The Reading Weather Bureau office measured 1.03 inches.**

- **1958, Wednesday–Thursday March 19-20: Snowstorm**

**A slow-moving storm dumped heavy slushy snow which accumulated nearly 3 feet on Lincoln Park, even more to the nearby south, and contained about 6 inches of rainfall equivalent. Electrical outages were widespread and lengthy. Electricity remained on in the city and West Reading, to where this family sought refuge. The Reading Weather Bureau measured only 16” of slush and 3.55” in rainfall equivalent.**

- **1960, Sunday-Monday September 11-12: Tropical Rainstorm Donna**

**Hurricane Donna tracked along the East Coast and brought heavy rains to inland locations, including Lincoln Park, mostly on Monday. Minor basement flooding occurred at this house, due mostly to an overwhelmed French drain at the bottom of an adjacent exterior stairwell. The Reading Weather Bureau measured rainfall of 4.46” plus 0.03” spillover into Tuesday.**

- **1966, Sunday January 30: Blizzard**

A snowstorm which began Saturday evening January 29 developed into a full-fledged blizzard during Sunday morning January 30 as the snow became whipped by strong to gale NW winds. The Reading Weather Bureau measured a fastest 1-minute wind of 54 mph. Visibilities were reduced frequently to under 0.1 mile for several hours. And the new snow was whipped into long drifts that reached a height of 8 feet along the fronts of houses. Interim shoveling efforts were rendered futile as the blowing snow filled the shoveled trenches within minutes. Amazingly, the sun was visible through the falling and blowing snow at midday, indicating the storm's gales were carrying the snow from the storm clouds into a dry slot. Nevertheless, accurate measurements of new snow were difficult. The Reading Weather Bureau reported 11.7" of new snow. True blizzard conditions are very rare in this area. But this storm might have met the criteria of a severe blizzard as temperatures hovered at or below 15 degrees. No occurrence of this magnitude, or even close, of blowing and drifting snow has been observed since to the present day. In the days that followed, kids tunneled inside the drifts, and snowplows were seen abandoned in the streets.

- **1966, Sunday July 3: Heat**

While the official LPWB highest temperature since 1983 stands at 105.3 degrees on "Fry-day" 22 July 2011, the heat of this sizzling Sunday might have been greater. During the swimming pool season, staff would measure the pool water temperature in the morning, then mount the thermometer in the shaded breezeway in from the pool gate at 1 PM, then post the water and air temperatures. On some really hot days, they would obtain and post an updated air temperature. The reading was 106 at 4 PM. These temperatures were generally regarded as fairly accurate. This swimming pool site is located 1/8 mile W of LPWB. Although reasonable unofficial maximum temperatures in the Reading PA area ranged up to 108, the Reading Weather Bureau maximum temperature was only 103.

- **1972, Wednesday-Friday June 21-23: Post-tropical Storm Agnes**

The heavy rains delivered by storm Agnes over several days has become the benchmark of main-stem river flooding through most of Pennsylvania, including the Schuylkill River at Reading. At Lincoln Park, the "whale's share" of the rain came first as torrential thunderstorm downpours evening of 21 June and then as steady moderately heavy rain through the daylight of 22 June. Galvanized tubs, initially empty with capacity of approximately 10 inches, left exposed at a local construction project during these rains, were filled to the brims by Thursday evening. Mainly light rains fell occasionally for two more days. The six days prior to the Agnes rains brought a few heavy showers. These pre-Agnes rains plus the rains directly attributed to Agnes totaled 12.01", including 8.0 in 24 hours at the NWS-sponsored co-op, Reading 3 N. Lincoln Park might have received about 2" more than that. Basement flooding was widespread and ranged from minor to severe, depending on the lowness of the houses.