

Lincoln Park retains its neighborhood charm

By Susan Miers Smith

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Berks Places is a recurring feature that will focus on small villages and census designated places throughout the county. History, nostalgia and local voices will shed some light on the quaint nooks and crannies of our area. Additional historical photographs accompany the online version of the articles.

Lincoln Park is another one of those few census-designated places that occupies space in more than one municipality. Most of the community is in Spring Township, with its southeastern corner stretching into Cumru Township.

With that division, there comes a school district difference, too. Lincoln Park kids could attend Wilson or Gov. Mifflin schools.

An April 1926 development plan for Lincoln Park by the Lincoln Development Co. was recorded May 19, 1926, in the Berks County Recorder of Deeds office. Revised development plans also are filed in numerous years, the last being recorded June 16, 1972.



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Lincoln Park is a census-designated place mostly in Spring Township with a small portion in Cumru Township.

Some of the original land had been owned by Francis K. and Mabel W. Savage, according to deed records.

In the 1950s, land from the Harry E. Hettinger farm, originally listed as Hettington on a 1953 plan, became part of Lincoln Park.

George J. and Fern F. (Landis) Super purchased land from Hettinger on July 23, 1959, and built a modest ranch house on the corner of Hettinger Road and Elmwood Avenue in the Spring section of Lincoln Park.

According to Volume 21 of "The Passing Scene" by George



COURTESY OF GEORGE M. MEISER IX

Lillian L. Landis, inset, served as postmistress of Lincoln Park from 1935 until the office closed, according to Volume 12 of "The Passing Scene" by George M. Meiser IX and Gloria Jean Meiser. The post office is shown circa 1950 and was in the Landis home, on the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Amherst Avenue. The post office opened May 11, 1929 with H.T. Schick as postmaster. The photographs were provided for the book by Dennis Casner-Witwer, great-great-grandson of Landis.

M. Meiser IX and his wife, Gloria Jean Meiser, Fern opened the Lincoln Park Beauty Salon there in 1959, and it continued to operate until 1992.

The former Hettinger farmhouse and out buildings were replaced by what is now Penns Crossing Apartments, 1400 W. Wyomissing Blvd., which provides

LINCOLN PARK BY THE NUMBERS

Population: 1,760

Age: 6% under age 5; 81.5% age 18 and older; and 16.1% age 65 and older

Total area: 0.3 of a square mile

Median **household income:** **\$89,819**

Employment rate: 78.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

affordable housing for those age 62 and older.

A beautiful brick Tudor-style home in the Cumru section of Lincoln Park caught the eye of Thomas E. and Pat Heintzman and on June 22, 1998, they purchased 101 Elmwood Ave.

Berks County Record of Deeds file show the Lincoln Development Co. sold two lots with a two-story brick home and garage to Joseph G. and Esther C. Albert on Jan. 13, 1933, and Rudolph and Anna Vigan sold two more lots to the Alberts on May 19, 1945, to make up the current Heintzman property on the corner of Elm-

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wood Avenue and Jefferson Boulevard. ,

The classic English Tudor's interior dark woodwork and large lot lured the Heintzmans away from a smaller home in Sinking Spring and they loved neighborhood once they moved in.

Pat said the large lot, where they have developed an extensive garden, is her favorite part of the property. They have added bulbs, perennials and trees to the azalea bushes that were there when they moved in. Tom built a lattice fence, pergola and treehouse that their grandchildren enjoyed.

It's a quiet neighborhood and already was fully developed by the time they moved in, they said.

Fellow Lincoln Park residents Mindi and Michael Asselin like that aspect of the neighborhood, too. It was the convenience of the location that drew them to purchase a home there in 2002.

"Honestly, one of the things about Lincoln Park is that it doesn't change much," said Tom Heintzman, 75.

One thing he did note was the demolition of Lincoln Park Elementary School in 2014.

"It was something that identified the community," he said. "You lose a school, you lose some of your identity."

A change Michael Asselin,

49, was the closing of a landmark store.

"I always used to tell people I lived across the street from the Kmart," he said. "Kmart closed, but everyone still recognizes where the Kmart was."

Mindi Asselin, 46, said she uses D&J Sandwich Shop, 200 Revere Blvd., as a reference point when directing people to the neighborhood....

The Heintzmans' next door neighbor, who live on Jefferson Boulevard, also moved to Lincoln Park in 2002.

"When we bought in 2002, it was starting to turn over from the original owners, and now I'm noticing that the people that are our age now — in their 40s and 50s — are starting to move on. And so younger people

are buying in Lincoln Park," said Cristyl Lapi, 45.

"I think the price point in the area is good for first-time, single-family detached homes," she said.

Rick Lapi, 44, grew up nearby on Perkasio Avenue in West Lawn.

"Lincoln Park Pool was kind of the place to go in the summer," he said. "I remember there was actually a little BMX bike course in the woods there, which probably wasn't allowed, but it was someplace kids would have hung out."

Other than the elementary school being torn down, a little more traffic and younger families starting to move into the area, Rick Lapi said Lincoln Park is basically the same neighborhood that they moved to 19 years ago.