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THE WHEELING AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY meets ten times a year every month except July and August. The Society welcomes new members and invites you to attend. Information about the Society may be obtained from Dr. Kenneth R. Nodyne, Editor, 63 Oakland Avenue, Wheeling, WV 26003.

COVER: Wheeling Conservatory of Music as it appeared in 1896.
HENRY J. ARBENZ: WHEELING MUSIC MASTER

By EDWARD C. WOLF

During the second half of the nineteenth century America came of age. No longer did the United States have to devote its primary energies simply to conquering the frontier; as the nation matured it became possible for American society to turn its attention to the fruits of civilization, of which the arts rank foremost. Wheeling, too, played a role in this development, and the growth of Wheeling from a frontier settlement of 1800 to an industrial and cultural center of 1900 is a microcosm of the maturing of America as a whole. This study aims to document the role one man, Henry J. Arbenz, played in the maturation of Wheeling as a regional cultural and musical center. Along with other primarily German-trained musicians such as Hermann Schockey and Edward Blumenberg, Arbenz made a contribution to Wheeling's artistic life which still bears fruits today.

Henry John Arbenz was born in Wheeling 16 June 1860 and was one of four sons of Wheeling businessman John Arbenz. Undoubtedly he obtained some of his musical interests from his father, who was a competent organist and well versed in the arts. According to biographical accounts carried in the Wheeling papers at the time of his death on 27 December 1906, John Arbenz was born in Switzerland 22 February 1828. When he was quite young his family moved to Scharnhausen, near Stuttgart, Germany, where he learned the craft of cabinet making. In 1849 he emigrated to Wheeling, where he opened a shop on Main Street hill, and upon his retirement in 1891 he had built his business into one of the largest wholesale and retail furniture establishments in this region.

He was president of the Arbenz Furniture Company of Chillicothe, Ohio, and was a principal stockholder in the Fiorentina Pottery of Chillicothe as well as in Wheeling's German Bank, Dollar Savings and Trust Company, and several other Wheeling business and financial institutions. On 14 June 1861 he married Catherine Zimmerman, a sister of Rev. Zimmerman, then pastor of Wheeling's Zion Lutheran Church. Both John and Catherine became lifelong members of Zion, and John also served as the church's organist. They had four sons: Fred C. Arbenz, an attorney who left Wheeling in late 1888 to reside in Chillicothe, Ohio; John P. Arbenz, a Wheeling attorney; Herman L. Arbenz, a civil engineer and engineer for Ohio County, West Virginia; and Henry J. Arbenz, the subject of this study.

From this brief synopsis of his family background, it is obvious that Henry was born into an environment that offered above-average cultural interests and opportunities for an American family of the 1860s and 1870s. He attended the public schools in Wheeling and also the then recently established West Virginia University. Having shown considerable musical talent, his father agreed to send young Henry — then only in his seventeenth year — to Germany to further his studies. Thus, in the Wheeling Intelligencer for 9 May 1877 we find the following item: "GOING TO EUROPE — Messrs. Henry Arbenz and John Hess will leave for Europe tomorrow. Mr. Arbenz, who is a son of John Arbenz, the furniture dealer, goes to Stuttgart [sic] to complete his musical education. Mr. Hess will make a short visit and return in a couple of months." Like most talented young American musicians of his day, young Henry set out upon the customary pilgrimage to Germany to complete his musical studies.

His studies at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart lasted from 1877 until 1883. During the last two years he was accepted as an advanced student, and his abilities were such that the conservatory employed him in a capacity comparable to that of a graduate teaching assistant in a modern American university. Among the papers which his daughter, Henrietta Arbenz Fulks, made available to this writer was his certificate from the conservatory attesting to his attendance and musical abilities. This manuscript document is of interest because it shows both the type of recommendation given by a nineteenth-century German conservatory and also evaluates Henry's musical abilities. The translation below endeavors to capture some of the spirit of the rather formal and flowery German text. It also indicates that young Henry was an accomplished musician who met the exacting standards of German performance and scholarship.

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
IN
STUTTGART

Mr. Henry Arbenz of Wheeling, West Virginia, attended the Conservatory of Music from July 1881 until now as a pupil in the artist's curriculum.

By virtue of commendable diligence and zeal during this period he made such progress in piano playing that he could perform difficult compositions in both classical and modern styles with brilliance, accomplishment, and musical understanding, and thereby is fully qualified to appear in concert. In addition he has the ability to provide both beginning and less advanced as well as advanced students with good piano instruction — as he has demonstrated within the Conservatory itself by skilled and capable teaching.

At the same time he has so comprehensively pursued his studies
in organ with great diligence and laudable effort that he understands how to perform classical and modern works of considerable difficulty with accomplished manual and pedal technique, and thereby is qualified to perform both as a concert artist of excellence and to provide good instruction in this subject.

During the past two years Mr. Arbenz participated in choral music activities with increasingly notable diligence and zeal and thereby acquired an acquaintance with choral literature and experience in the manner and methods of rehearsing and directing choirs, which may be of use to him should he eventually be able to work in this field.

In the area of music theory he has studied instrumentation, demonstrating good talent and praiseworthy industriousness with satisfactory results. Also, from diligent and zealous study in a course taken privately in musical form he acquired a well-grounded theoretical knowledge of the various musical art forms.

Finally, he has participated with laudable diligence in learning about the science of the organ (lessons on the construction and maintenance of the organ), and thereby, also, gained estimable knowledge of that subject.

By virtue of his flawless, general total preparation, Mr. Arbenz deserves all the more recommendation for advancement in his musical career.

Given in testimony: Stuttgart 30 June 1883.

The Director of the Conservatory of Music:
Professor Dr. Faisst, also teacher of organ, choral music, and science of the organ; Professor W. Krüger, teacher of piano; Carl Doppler, director of music for the royal court and teacher of instrumentation; Professor R. Seyerlen, teacher of form

Each of the above teachers individually signed the certificate except for Krüger, whose name was signed by Dr. Faisst as proxy.

The teachers who signed this certificate were those who taught Henry while he was an advanced student. During the other four years he had lessons and classes with various other faculty as is indicated by an account in the Journal of Fine Arts, which states that he “studied the Piano under Professor Dr. Lebert, Professor Kreuger and Professor Dr. Pruckner; Organ under Professor Attingar and Professor Dr. Faisst; Theory and Musical Form under Professor Siemens [sic], Professor Goetchius and Professor Dr. Faust; Orchestration, Instrumentation and Conducting under Court Capellmeister Carl Doppler, of the Royal Orchestra of H.M. the King of W[u]rttemberg.”

Immediately after receiving his certificate the 23-year-old Arbenz returned to the United States. He arrived in New York about 23 July 1883, since an item in the Intelligencer for that date reads: “Mr. F.C. Arbenz, President of the Maennerchor Singing Society, left Buffalo Saturday morning for New York, where he expects to meet his brother, Henry, who arrives there to-day from Europe, having completed his musical education at Stuttgart University [sic]. Mr. Arbenz will be a decided addition to Wheeling’s musical talent.” (F.C. Arbenz left from Buffalo because he had been attending the 1883 Buffalo Saengerfest along with other members of the Maennerchor). After returning to Wheeling Henry lost no time in “hanging out his shingle” and entering the city’s musical life. An advertisement in the Intelligencer on 14 August 1883 states that Arbenz would offer “Thorough Instruction in PIANO AND ORGAN PLAYING. (Stuttgart Method). Harmony, Composition, Instrumentation and Chorus Singing. Orders can be left at any of the Music Stores in the city.” Undoubtedly the fact that his father was a prominent Wheeling businessman and his brother an attorney and president of one of Wheeling’s influential German singing societies greatly smoothed Henry’s entry into the mainstream of Wheeling musical life.

About a month later the Maennerchor provided a forum for what appears to have been Henry’s debut as a performer following his return from Stuttgart. The Intelligencer for 19 September 1883 reads: “The Maennerchor Singing Society, assisted by the Ladies Section, Kramer’s Orchestra and Prof. H.J. Arbenz will give a concert at Maennerchor Hall this evening, for which a fine programme has been arranged.” An account of this concert in the same paper the following day indicates that the program opened the society’s “winter festivities” and the audience was restricted to “members and their ladies and a few invited friends.” After an opening orchestral selection and a chorus, “Prof. H.J. Arbenz gave a very pleasing piano solo, the first part being a pretty little composition of his own, and the second one of Chopin’s polonaises . . . Prof. Arbenz’s piano solo was deserving of more than passing notice. As is well known he has but recently returned from Stuttgart, where he was for six years under the most competent instructors. He is an accomplished pianist of very high order and a composer of no mean merit, provided the selection from his pen played last evening is to be considered a sample.” The article then adds that he is working on a composition for the Maennerchor to sing with orchestra. Perhaps this was the selection which was used at the 1885 Wheeling Saengerfest (see below).

Arbenz strengthened his claim to a segment of Wheeling’s musical life very next month when the Maennerchor elected him to become their director as of 29 October. This same election chose H.D. Bayha to be vice-director and H.W. Eitz president. Apparently Fred C. Arbenz
stepped down as president so that his brother could become director. This enabled the Maennerchor to have a director whose musical competence could match that of Hermann Schockey, director for the competing Arion Singing Society. Schockey had been director for the Maennerchor, but left to assume the same post for the prestigious Arion, Wheeling’s wealthiest and most socially prominent society. Considerable friction existed between the Arion and the Maennerchor. The Arion was founded in 1881 from a merger of the old Harmonie and old Maennerchor societies that had consolidated in 1879. However, a dissident group within the old Maennerchor headed by Fred C. Arbenz opposed this merger and continued to operate as the Maennerchor. This Maennerchor claimed to be a continuation of the original group—a claim hotly disputed by the Arion Society. Since the original Maennerchor was founded in 1855 and was the oldest of Wheeling’s singing societies, it had the right and prestige of being first whenever there was a parade or other ceremony involving the singing societies. Therefore, the Arion and the “new” Maennerchor were always disputing which group had seniority—a dispute which was never settled and never ended until the Maennerchor itself faded from the scene around 1890 after F.C. Arbenz moved to Chillicothe, Ohio, and Henry J. Arbenz left the directorship. The dispute became so acrimonious that the two societies would not cooperate with each other, and they even took care to travel to national singing society festivals on separate trains so as not to rub shoulders!

As director of the Maennerchor Arbenz quickly rose to prominence in Wheeling musical life. Frequently he appeared as piano soloist on the society’s programs, and he also performed with another Wheeling pianist, Herman Ebeling, who by now had moved to Columbus, Ohio. Like Arbenz, Ebeling had studied at the Stuttgart Conservatory. His appearance with Arbenz at the society’s traditional New Year’s Eve concert and ball 31 December 1883 was typical.

After the various Wheeling singing societies had returned from the national Buffalo Saengerfest of 1883, a movement began to host a regional festival in Wheeling—something which had not been attempted since 1860. Henry Arbenz and his brother were leaders in this movement, and during 1884 plans were laid for Henry himself to be the festival’s musical director. Being named musical director of a regional Saengerfest was a real accomplishment for a young man in his mid-twenties, and it indelibly stamped Arbenz as a principal leader of Wheeling’s musical life for the next forty years.

Wheeling’s Beethoven and Mozart singing societies cooperated with the Maennerchor in hosting the 1885 festival, but the Arion remained aloof from the planning because of their running feud with the Maennerchor. Undoubtedly much of the 1884-85 season focused on the forthcoming festival in addition to the usual round of concerts at which Arbenz conducted and performed. The sponsoring Wheeling societies presented Arbenz with a ceremonial baton for the Saengerfest on the occasion of his 25th birthday. The opening portions of the account in the Intelligencer for 16 June 1885 read as follows:

Last evening about 10 o’clock a very pleasant event took place in the hall of the Maennerchor Singing Society on Market street. The active members of the society were resting after having been hard at work for two hours rehearsing the music that is to be sung at the coming district Saengerfest, when in walked a majority of the active members of the Beethoven and Mozart societies, which societies with the Maennerchor are getting up the Saengerfest. The gentlemen of the Maennerchor appeared to have had notice of the visit—all except Prof. Henry J. Arbenz, who had been drilling them, and who is to be the musical director of the Fest. Tables were quickly set and a substantial lunch brought out. The gentlemen present, about fifty in number, gathered around the table, Mr. William Grewe, chairman of the general Committee of Arrangements, taking the head, while Prof. Arbenz sat at the right. As soon as all were seated Mr. Grewe rose, and in a short but felicitous speech presented Prof. Arbenz with a very handsome gold mounted ebony baton. Prof. Arbenz was the victim of a genuine surprise, and for a time was at a loss for words in which to respond. Hearty applause greeted the remarks of both Mr. Grewe and the recipient of the handsome present. On the plate of the baton was inscribed the following:

PROF. H.J. ARBENZ,
From His Friends,
June 16, 1885.

Today is Prof. Arbenz’s twenty-fifth birthday, but last night was such an excellent time to present the baton that it was taken advantage of.

Arbenz undoubtedly devoted most of his time during June and early July of 1885 in preparing for the Saengerfest. Not only did he have to study the various scores he was to direct, but he also traveled to other cities to rehearse the choruses which planned to participate. This meant that he traveled to Allegheny City (now northside Pittsburgh), Steubenville, and Parkersburg-Marietta, where choruses from these areas assembled for their special rehearsals. The stories in the Intelligencer and Register for 11 July are indicative when they report that on Thursday, 9 July he had rehearsed with a chorus of 400 voices in the Robert Blum Hall in Alle-
gheny City. While German singing societies technically were only male groups, Arbenz introduced more variety into the program by utilizing the ladies sections of the various societies and performing works for mixed voices, too.

The actual Saengerfest occurred 20-23 July 1885 at the Alhambra Palace, a large roller skating rink on the southwest corner of Chapline and 33rd streets which had been converted into a concert hall seating 4,000 persons. The formal concerts were on 20 and 21 July, while 22 July was devoted to a huge parade followed by a picnic at the state fairgrounds on Wheeling Island. The final day featured business meetings followed by an afternoon excursion to Wheeling Park attended by about 5,000 persons. Since details of the Saengerfest have already been published in this journal, they will not be repeated here. Suffice it to state that the programs were of high quality and presented music by the best European composers. The choruses and soloists were supported by a symphony orchestra consisting of six first and four second violins, two cellos, three basses, three flutes and one flageolet (a type of flute), one oboe, two clarinets, one bassoon, two horns, two cornets, three trombones, one tuba, tympani, and percussion. Arbenz himself arranged Franz Abt's song, "Willkommen," for chorus and orchestra, and this was the initial choral number on the festival's opening concert. The 1886 Saengerfest brought Arbenz a tremendous amount of publicity, and this unquestionably increased the number of his pupils as well as the demand for his services as a pianist or organist. During the mid and later 1880s he maintained his studio at 1319 Market Street in Crangle's Block, as indicated by his business card. A program dated 7 June 1889 was probably typical of the recital programs presented by his students. It included keyboard selections by composers such as Weber, Haydn, Beethoven, Gottschalk, Mozart, and Chopin, as well as lesser names such as Tours, Spinndler, Boscovitz, Goldner, etc. There was one selection entitled "Early Youth" by Arbenz himself and dedicated to its young performers, Charlie Killmeyer and Morgan Heiskell.

Despite his success in establishing himself in Wheeling's musical life, during the later 1880s Arbenz explored ways of returning to Stuttgart for further study. As we shall see, he had personal as well as musical reasons for such study. During the spring of 1887 he must have written the Stuttgart Conservatory's director inquiring about returning and the availability of financial support, since a typewritten letter from Dr. Emmanuel Faisst, conservatory director, dated 2 June 1887 is among the miscellaneous papers which Henrietta Arbenz Fulks made available to this writer. Faisst states that he was most pleased to learn that Arbenz would like to undertake additional study at Stuttgart, but he regretted that it would not be possible to offer him financial aid since there already were so many
talented students needing such aid.

Two years later, however, Arbenz did return to Germany, but this time the primary reason was to marry a young operatic soprano whom he had met while studying in Stuttgart. An item in the Intelligenz for 28 June 1889 states, "Prof. H.J. Arbenz, his mother and brother, John, will on July 4 sail on the steamer Hammonia for Hamburg, to spend the summer in Germany." This summer in Germany culminated in his marriage on 10 September. A copy of the marriage certificate is among the Arbenz personal papers. In translation it reads: "On 10 September 1889 Henry John Arbenz, born 16 June 1860 in Wheeling, pianist, son of the furniture manufacturer Henry John Arbenz in Wheeling and of Katharina, nee Zimmerman, and Karoline Knobloch, born 3 Sept. 1859 in Basel, daughter of the architect Georg Knobloch in Karlsruhe and of Maria, nee Hersperger were married by the undersigned cleric in the Evangelical parish according to the established civic marriage procedures for the registrar's office of Karlsruhe." It was dated at Karlsruhe 11 September 1889.

According to a copy of her birth certificate dated at Basel 7 July 1898 and among the Arbenz papers, the new bride's full name was Maria Caroline Knobloch. (The documents are inconsistent as to whether Caroline was spelled with a "C" or a "K"). However, like many female performers she used a professional name, Lilly (also Lilli) Karen. Sometimes she also used the name of Lina Knobloch, and after her marriage she sometimes was listed as Lilly Karen-Arbenz. Among the Arbenz papers are several programs from her concerts around Germany and excerpts from newspaper reviews compiled by Stern Concert Management of Berlin.

Following their marriage Henry and Caroline booked passage for New York, leaving from Southampton 20 September. Two undated clippings from one of the Wheeling German newspapers, perhaps the Volksblatt, are in the Arbenz scrapbooks, and Henry's return to Wheeling with his new bride can best be described in a translation of these clippings as given below. Obviously he had kept his marriage a secret from his Wheeling associates. These clippings must have been from newspapers published about 30 September and 1 October 1889, since the Intelligenz for Tuesday, 1 October contained a front-page story on the reception which the Maennerchor gave Henry and Caroline "last evening," i.e. 30 September. An advertisement in the Intelligenz for 2 October 1889 states that Prof. Arbenz would resume instruction at his music rooms, 1318 Market Street, Crangle's Block, on Monday, 7 October.

Yesterday morning Professor Arbenz with his mother and brother returned safely from Europe. They were accompanied by Fred Arbenz of Chillicothe, who had traveled to New York to meet them. Professor Arbenz looks good, and the trip was enjoyable for his mother, brother, and himself. Primarily he used his residence in Germany to undertake additional study in music, to visit his old teachers and friends, and to establish new acquaintances. The travelers were warmly greeted at the railroad station by their family and friends. This evening the Maennerchor, which Mr. Arbenz directs, will hold a splendid reception in their hall, and it will not lack a surprise. We bid Professor Arbenz, his mother, and his brother hearty welcome to American soil.

[Next day] A RECEPTION OF HONOR
for Professor H.J. Arbenz and his amiable young wife prepared by the Maennerchor

Yesterday we reported the safe return of Professor H.J. Arbenz from Europe and that there would be a nice reception for him by the Maennerchor Singing Society and its Ladies Section, whose esteemed director he is. In order to keep it a surprise, we did not reveal that our young artist took a life's companion in Germany...

The number six plays a great role in the life of the professor. Twice six years ago he traveled to Germany to devote himself to the study of music. Six years ago he completed his studies and returned here as a graduate of the Stuttgart Conservatory. While he was studying he became acquainted with the young lady Lilli Karen, the only daughter and the only child of the city engineer for Karlsruhe, the residence of the grand duke of Baden, who is devoted to music. She is a charming, lovely blonde with a silvery pure, gorgeous, all-embracing soprano voice. It was only to be expected that she made a deep impression on him, and Mr. Arbenz was so fortunate as to have been received by his adored. His studies were over, he had to leave and return here, where our readers know he quickly earned a great reputation as master of the piano and organ, and as conductor and teacher. In his heart he secretly and faithfully preserved the memory of his Lilli, and he pursued the establishment of relations.

Meanwhile Miss Karen achieved triumph after triumph in her home- land. She had the honor of finding an important patron in the grand duke and grand duchess of Baden (daughter of the old Kaiser Wilhelm). She appeared in opera and in concert in all major cities of Germany and was enthusiastically received everywhere. In Darmstadt she appeared in a concert and his royal highness was so enchanted by her singing that he caused Miss Karen to appear before him and most highly congratulated her. A great many newspaper clippings are before us, and if one knows how severe German criticism is, thus is her praise all the more to be acclaimed. Miss Karen had just finished a concert tour in the summer under the manage-
ment of Stern of Berlin and won new honors. Six years had passed and Professor Arbenz had again undertaken a trip to Germany. Naturally he visited Miss Karen, his courtship was accepted, and on Tuesday, 10 September at 9:30 in the morning the two were joined in marriage by the Court Chaplain Helbing in the castle church of Karlsruhe. Mr. John Arbenz, brother of the groom, and Miss Griff, a friend of the bride, served as witnesses. After accepting the best wishes of those present, a wedding dinner was held in the Grand Hotel. The couple were honored with many fine and elegant wedding gifts. Mr. Arbenz then took a honeymoon with his young bride to Baden Baden, then traveled via Strassburg to Paris, visited the exhibition, climbed the Eiffel Tower, and sailed with his bride, mother, and brother from Southampton on the 20th, as our readers know. The marriage was kept so secret that except for Mr. Arbenz, Sr., no one here knew anything about it — not even his brother Fred of Chillicothe, who met him in New York.

The Ladies Section of the Maennerchor, supported by the men singers, had very magnificently decorated the spacious hall. On the entryway and over the door hung "Willkommen" woud about with flowers. All members of the society and very many friends of the professor had arrived well before, and countless hearty congratulations occurred as the beloved director appeared and entered with his amiable young bride on his arm. Mr. Julius Lohse, president of the Maennerchor, mounted the stage a little before 10 o'clock, spoke a few words of congratulation, and introduced Pastor Ulfert, who welcomed the young couple here in a persuasive manner intermixed with much humor.

The Ladies Section provided the food and the men the necessary drink. About 10:30 the Opera House Orchestra appeared, and after they had performed several charming pieces, a dance was improvised and opened with a polonaise led by Andy Seifert and Louis Juergens. There was dancing until near morning. Professor Arbenz and his young wife, who quickly won the hearts of those present by her kind and affable manner, left the dance about midnight, since she still was somewhat tired from travel.

The new Mrs. Arbenz made an excellent partner for her husband in his musical work, since she could sing or teach voice while he played or handled keyboard instruction. She made her Wheeling debut in a benefit concert for the Home for Friendless Women given in the Opera House (Market at 14th Street) on 25 November 1889. A short review in the Register the following day states, "Her debut was a success. She sang an aria from Lohengrin, and she sang it well. She has a sweet voice that she handles with the most remarkable ease, and it seems she can do with it anything she desires." Although the program specified there would be no encores, she was compelled to respond with a little ballad. However, the review notes that because of a draft on the stage she did not sing a second aria which had been programmed, and the audience was "much disappointed."

On 27 December 1889 the Arbenz husband and wife duo presented the first of a series of three concerts in Maennerchor Hall. These concerts attracted considerable attention in the Wheeling papers. From the clippings in the Arbenz scrapbooks which the author examined it appears that the German newspaper gave the most detailed reports of the programs, but the Intelligencer and Register also provided good coverage. In an undated clipping the German paper reports that season tickets for the three programs were $2.00 and were sold at the C.A. House Music Store. For the first program the Elm Grove Railroad ran a special train that left after the concert and provided service for those persons living out National Road. Since the initial program was during the Christmas holidays, it featured a cycle of Christmas songs by Cornelius in addition to piano selections. Wheeling violinist Hermann Schockey and organist Hermann Arbenz joined Henry in playing Beethoven's "Largo maestoso." The second program included mostly German art songs, an aria from Meyerbeer's The Hugenots, and piano selections by Liszt and Moskowski. The third and final program of the series was given just before Henry and Caroline left for the New Orleans Sangerfest (see below). An undated clipping from the German paper in the Arbenz scrapbooks states that in addition to works by Chopin, Schubert, and Schumann, Henry played one of his own compositions, "Song without Words." Caroline sang various art songs, including Schumann's "Dichterliebe" and a setting of Goethe's poem, "The Shepherd," composed by her husband. Henry's younger brother, Hermann, also appeared on this program and played two piano solos, a fantasy by Mozart and a pavane by Sharp.

Having quickly established herself on the Wheeling scene, Caroline Arbenz soon made her name known on the national level. She was engaged as one of the two soprano soloists for the 26th Sangerfest of the North American Sängerbund held in New Orleans 12-15 February 1890. A copy of the Sangerfest program book among the Arbenz papers indicates that she sang Rosina's aria from Rossini's Barber of Seville, Pamina's aria from Mozart's Magic Flute, Marguerite's scene from Gounod's Faust, and the waltz "Les Belles Viennoises" by Arditi. She appeared on four different concerts. The program book indicates that a special festival hall was constructed on Lee Circle in New Orleans for this Sangerfest; it was an elaborate structure designed to accommodate 1400 singers, a symphony.
orchestra of 100 players, seats for 4,056 persons on the ground floor, and 2,335 seats plus 12 boxes in the gallery. Henry accompanied his wife to New Orleans, and an undated newspaper clipping from a New Orleans paper in the Arbenz scrapbooks sheds a little light on his attitude toward the contemporary state of American musical taste. It states, "Mr. Arbenz does not appear much impressed with musical prospects in this country, and, had it not been for the Saengerfest, it is doubtful if Mrs. Arbenz would have appeared in concert outside of her home city."

Professor and Mrs. Arbenz resolved to do their part to improve musical prospects in this country, so in the fall of 1890 they organized the Wheeling Conservatory of Music, originally located in a house at 45 Fifteenth Street. In 1890 Wheeling's West Virginia Printing Company printed a 20-page catalog for the new conservatory. It lists the faculty as being Henry J. Arbenz, director, and teacher of piano, organ, and theory; Mrs. Caren-Arbenz as teacher of voice culture, dramatic art, and modern languages; Mr. E. Speil as teacher of violin and clarinet; Miss Annie Long, teacher of harp; Mr. Herman Grimm, teacher of flute; and Mr. Julius Hoose, teacher of cornet. The preface calls attention to the need for improving the quality of musical instruction in America, and it praises the efforts of the Music Teachers' National Association to upgrade instruction. The catalog emphasized the value of class instruction, but also noted that private lessons were available. For the first year the school year began 15 September and closed the last week in June, consisting of four terms of ten weeks each. Tuition and fees for each term varied from $5 to $30, depending upon the teacher and the type of instruction. For this fee a student received two lessons per week; class lessons were one hour and private lessons a half hour.

On 4 February 1891 pupils of the Conservatory presented their first "Pruefungs-Concert" (literally, "examination concert") in the Arion Music Hall at Main and Twentieth streets. Apparently Henry Arbenz was much more friendly with the Arion Society than his brother Fred, who was involved in the Arion-Maennerchor controversy of the 1880s. Moreover, after 1890 the Maennerchor disappeared from the Wheeling scene, and one may assume that its members drifted into the other three societies — the Arion, Mozart, and Beethoven. Anyway, after Henry had founded the Wheeling Conservatory one finds numerous instances of cooperation between the Conservatory and the Arion Society. The Conservatory's concerts generally comprised twenty to twenty-five different selections, primarily pieces for piano or voice with a few numbers for cornet, violin, or flute interspersed throughout the program. A second concert closed the inaugural season and was held at Arion Hall 30 June 1891. It appears that during the early years of operation at least two major concerts were held each season, with additional recitals for advanced pupils as needed.

The Conservatory prospered, and by 1895 it became necessary to seek new and larger quarters. On 10 September 1895 Henry's father, John Arbenz, purchased property at 39 Fifteenth Street, and it was conveyed to him from Anna D. Kelly on 30 October 1895. John Arbenz then proceeded to erect the building which still stands at 39 Fifteenth Street, and which was originally designed as a combination residence and teaching facility. After John Arbenz's death the property was conveyed by a division of his estate to Henry J. Arbenz on 31 July 1907. Today the property is owned by attorneys Dana and Melvin Kahle. The exterior still appears much as it did when the building was finished in 1896, though the interior has been drastically changed. What was formerly the third-floor music hall has been converted into two floors, making the original three-story structure into a four-story structure today.

On 16 September 1896 an advertisement first appeared in the Intelligencer announcing that the Conservatory would open on 28 September, and readers were urged to "Write for catalogue." The preface to this catalog contains a couple paragraphs of special interest. They read:

Owing to the continually increasing number of its students, the former quarters were found inadequate, and in order to be able to satisfactorily meet the demands of all who prefer to obtain their musical instruction at the hands of competent and thorough instructors, it was found necessary to erect the magnificent edifice, No. 39, on Fifteenth street, than which none can be found in the Middle States better suited and arranged, devoted to this purpose...

With a new and larger building, especially constructed and arranged for the purpose, additional instruments and apparatus for the special branches of instruction, together with additions to the Faculty, we feel confident that in the future, as in the past, we can assure better results than can be obtained elsewhere in the study of Music in all its branches.

Changes in the faculty from the original listing in the 1890-91 catalog include Nicholas Bornholdt now teaching violin, mandolin, guitar, and musical history, while the teacher for flute and clarinet was listed as "pending." A "Kindergarten Department" under the direction of Mrs. Arbenz had also been added. Otherwise the courses of instruction and operating procedures were very similar to those outlined in the 1890-91 catalog. One advantage of the new building was that it included a large music room suitable for all except the very largest recitals and con-
certs. A story in the Intelligencer 18 September 1909 gives a good description of the Conservatory as it was then. It reads:

THE WHEELING CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
Opening Takes Place Monday, September 20 —
Interesting Chat With the Founder,
Prof. Henry J. Arbenz.

Prof. Henry J. Arbenz, who has just returned from a ten-day combined business and pleasure trip through Ohio, talked in a very interesting manner yesterday at the Wheeling Conservatory of Music of the events of his twenty-six years' experience in the local music field. During that time Prof. Arbenz has graduated a large number of the leading musicians of Wheeling, and the excellence of his work is amply testified to by their success. The conservatory building, familiar to all members of the city's best musical circles, was erected at No. 39 Fifteenth street in 1896, and its entire history has held nothing but unqualified success. This success is due to uniform thoroughness of teaching, the use of the most approved methods as originated by the world's masters, and that quality of earnestness which must be a characteristic of the successful modern musical instructor.

The manner of instructing organ pupils is one of the special features of the conservatory. The instrument used is a specially imported one, manufactured in Germany, and is the same kind used by the leading conservatories of Europe. For promoting absolute accuracy of touch it is without an equal. Besides this, the Arbenz conservatory is equipped with all the many instruments and conveniences of every sort that go to make musical study a pleasure. The Clavier system, which was first introduced into this city by Prof. Arbenz twenty-five years ago, and the technicon, are features that are utilized at this modern institution to the greatest advantage. Both are of advantage in developing accuracy and strength of the fingers which is so necessary to the attainment of the highest results.

An Intelligencer reporter was shown through the conservatory last evening through the courtesy of Prof. Arbenz, and the various advantages and points of interest explained in a most entertaining way. A feature affording special pleasure to the students and to their friends is the main music hall, which they are permitted to use freely for elite musical events. For this purpose it is second to none in the city, and throughout the coming fall and winter there will undoubtedly be a number of noteworthy events held within its portals. Prof. Arbenz is the local representative of the Everett and Harvard pianos, and is in a position to supply students or others with instruments of both musical and artistic merit at very moderate prices.

Mrs. Arbenz will again take a limited number of pupils. Mrs. Arbenz, who has had years of experience as a vocalist and teacher in Europe, has had pronounced success in developing the voice, and is in charge of the vocal department of the conservatory. Prof. Arbenz, the founder of the conservatory, has had seven years of the most practical training possible to secure...

The Wheeling Conservatory appears to have functioned successfully from its founding in 1890 through at least 1916. Wheeling city directories list Arbenz as "Arbenz Henry J., director Wheeling Conservatory of Music, res. 39 15th" from the 1898-99 directory through the 1915-16 directory. However, in 1919-20 the listing simply reads, "Arbenz Henry J., music tchr" at 39 Fifteenth Street. Undoubtedly World War I had a harmful effect on the Conservatory as it did on all of Wheeling's German-oriented organizations and businesses. Henry and Caroline were unabashedly German-oriented in their musical tastes and methods of teaching, and this could only have been awkward after the outbreak of war in April 1917. At any rate, the Wheeling Conservatory appears to have lost some of the influence it had on Wheeling's musical life at the time World War I occurred.

Henry Arbenz was a strong believer in developing proper keyboard technique. As aids in building finger strength and dexterity he used various technique claviers in addition to the regular piano. These claviers were practice keyboards on which one could control the degree of pressure required to press the keys. An article published in the Register 18 September 1904 and which Arbenz printed as a promotional flyer is rather revealing. A portion of it reads:

Prof. Arbenz has spent seven years in the best European schools and with the training and ideas obtained abroad has always been ready to apply any new idea that met with his approval. The Virgil method with the Practice Clavier, which is gradually gaining ground, and used by the thinking teachers of the profession, and which in the last few years has been introduced in this section of the country by a few teachers as the most modern method, has in reality been approved, introduced and used in this city by Prof. Arbenz for the last 21 years. This instrument was invented by a Mr. Virgil, of New York, and originally called Techniphone, but subsequent improvements brought on a change in the name to the present Practice Clavier. This is not the only device used in this up-to-date institution for the development of piano technique. The "Technicon"
is not to be underestimated for it has achieved wonders for many hands that have been weakened by wrong methods of practice.

For Organ students the Conservatory has the only instrument of its kind imported from Stuttgart, Germany. Practicing room and piano can be rented by the hour to such persons and pupils who have no instruments at home. Anyone desirous of buying a fine piano will find a fine selection always on hand at a very low figure. In short, this institution endeavors to meet the wants of the piano student in every particular.

Arbenz was a devoted follower of the multi-volume piano method compiled by Dr. Sigismund Lebert and Dr. Louis Stark, professors in the Stuttgart Conservatory, and first published about 1855. Published in America by White-Smith and Co. as Grand Theoretical and Practical Piano School, it received several German as well as undated American editions. Among the composers who wrote "artistic etudes" for this piano method were Brahms, Moscheles, and Hiller, while Liszt endorsed the method and had some of his compositions included in it. This writer recently perused a copy of one volume of White-Smith's American version which turned up recently at a Wheeling-area auction. It was of added interest because the back cover had an advertisement for David, Burkham & Tyler Co., 1416-1418 Market Street, Wheeling. Lebert and Stark certainly compiled one of the most thorough nineteenth-century piano methods, and Arbenz's devotion to this method testifies to the thoroughness of both his own training and his own teaching. He still used Lebert and Stark even when it had become dated, and a personal letter among the Arbenz papers from the noted American music publisher Theodore Presser to Arbenz dated 12 August 1907 indicates that Arbenz must have been trying to convince Presser to publish an updated version. It reads:

In reply to your favor regarding the Lebert and Stark Method I will say that your idea might be practical and advisable were it not for the fact that Lebert and Stark is about dead in this country. I possess the plates of the whole three volumes and would almost sell them for old metal. The whole system has died out in this country and there is not a bit of use in trying to revive it. A departure from the original system of any work always fails. People want the real thing or nothing. Lebert and Stark put their material together as they wanted it and "let no man put it asunder." I do not think that I would care to touch anything that had their name in connection with it. It would be better to build up a complete new system rather than to work up some old one...

However, I should be glad to see you on August 16th if you happen to be passing through the city.

Yours truly,

Theo. Presser

In addition to their work as music educators, Henry and Caroline Arbenz continued to play a role in Wheeling life as performers. Numerous programs of all types during the 1890s and early 1900s list their appearances, often as a husband-wife duo. For a number of years Henry followed in his father's footsteps as organist at Zion Lutheran Church, resigning from that position 1 September 1909. Programs among the Arbenz papers indicate that he directed a variety of church-related concerts by groups from St. John's Protestant Church as well as from Zion. Typical of programs which he directed was a performance of John Stainer's "The Crucifixion" at Zion on Palm Sunday evening, 12 April 1908. During the 1897-98 season Henry organized the Orpheus Male Chorus, which functioned for a few years around 1900. Apparently he wanted to give Wheeling a male chorus that was not as restricted in membership as those of the German singing societies. The chorus programs among the Arbenz papers indicate that special soloists and instrumental numbers were featured in addition to the choral selections. For example, the second annual concert given in the Opera House 21 March 1899 included soprano, mezzo-soprano, violin, and piano soloists in addition to tenor and bass soloists. The second half of this program featured the second act of Flohov's opera, Martha. In addition to being a performer and a conductor, Henry also served as an adjudicator for choral events. Several undated newspaper clippings in the Arbenz scrapbooks (around 1900) indicate that he served as a judge for the musical portions of tri-state Turners' conventions in the Pittsburgh area for at least eight consecutive years.

While Henry J. Arbenz's claim to fame in the Wheeling area primarily is as a teacher, performer, and conductor, one should also mention his role as one of West Virginia's minor composers. He wrote numerous smaller pieces for the keyboard, often for some of his pupils, and he also composed a variety of songs and shorter choral pieces. This writer has a copy of "Our Ships of Liberty," a piece of sheet music for soloist and mixed chorus to words by G.J. Walton of Benwood, West Virginia, which Arbenz wrote to honor "our naval heroes Dewey, Schley, and Sampson." Its copyright is dated 1898, and it is a competent little piece with a catchy chorus whose patriotic text hailing the "red, white, and blue" is typical of the type of sheet music ground out during the Spanish-American War. Of greater scope is his "Fantasia Pastorale," a programmatic piece for organ which Henry probably wrote either while he was studying in Stuttgart or shortly after he returned to America in 1883, since this appears to be the "Fantasia" mentioned in the Intelli-
gencer 16 June 1885 at the conclusion of the article describing how the Wheeling singing societies presented a ceremonial baton to him as conductor of the 1885 Saengerfest. Arbenz provided the following synopsis when he played the "Fantasie Pastorale" for a Womans Musical Club Concert at Wheeling's Thomson Methodist Church 29 November 1906. 18

The old shepherd gathering his flock hears from his distant home, his favorite melody, which is a warning of the approaching storm. On his homeward march, he narrowly escapes being caught in an avalanche. After the various echoes die away and while kneeling in prayer, he hears his old comrade approaching with the bagpipes. They unite in song, continue the march, and arrive home in safety, where he dramatically narrates his experience.

The "Fantasie Pastorale" was heard more recently when Dr. William P. Crosbie, organist-choirmaster at Wheeling's St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, performed it 11 December 1974 during one of his noon-hour recitals. 19 Henry also encouraged composition by members of his family as indicated by two pieces of sheet music in this writer's possession—a short "Evening Prayer" by his wife (undated) and "Ding Dong," a Christmas two-step written in 1901 by his eleven-year-old daughter Henrietta.

While we have considered Henry and Caroline for their extensive professional accomplishments, one should also mention their role as parents. They had six children, two of whom—a son and a daughter—died in infancy. The other four children included Wheeling dentist Dr. John G. Arbenz; Mrs. Lillian Moeller of Columbus, Ohio; Mrs. Paula Rose Charlton of Wheeling and later Lawrence, Kansas; and Mrs. Henrietta Fulks, 20 a longtime Wheeling resident who first called this writer's attention to her father's achievements. One should note that Mrs. Fulks herself was a very skilled pianist and was active in Wheeling's cultural and social life for several decades, not to mention her work as one of the leaders for women's suffrage in West Virginia. 21

Henry J. Arbenz died on Sunday, 16 September 1928 at the home of his daughter, Henrietta. The obituary notices in the Wheeling papers for 17 September observe that he had been in ill health "for some time," but his death came "rather unexpectedly, but quite peacefully." Apparently he had retired from active music teaching and performance sometime in the early 1920s, since the Register obituary states, "From the time of his return to Wheeling from Stuttgart until a few years ago when he determined to rest upon his laurels, his life was devoted to and closely intertwined with the musical life of this community... His talents and deep interest in his art contributed much toward establishing musical Wheeling in the high position it now holds."

Caroline Arbenz survived her husband only a little more than two years. She died on Friday, 30 January 1931, in her home at 39 Fifteenth Street— the old Wheeling Conservatory. One minor mystery in her obituary notices in the Wheeling papers for 31 January is that she is listed as being the daughter of Bernard George and Marie Riegel Knobloch, whereas her mother's maiden name is listed as Hersperger on her birth certificate. 22 While this study has concerned only Caroline's activities as a musician, she was a very active woman with many interests. This is confirmed by the last paragraph of her obituary in the Register for 31 January 1931 which reads:

Given to profound and original thinking, Mrs. Arbenz was the author of many works of poetry and fiction. She did not confine her interest to her particular art but was in addition an accomplished student of literature, theosophy and the languages. She was the foundress of the Wheeling Theological [i.e. Theosophic] society. A woman of grace, quiet dignity and European charm, Mrs. Arbenz's death will not only be regretted by her multitude of friends but by countless acquaintances and admirers as well.

At her funeral Wheeling singer Mrs. Flora Williams, assisted by Miss Adelaide Schockley at the piano, sang "Evening Prayer," the little composition by Mrs. Arbenz mentioned above. 23

And so it was that Henry and Caroline Arbenz helped Wheeling to "come of age." They brought Old World standards of education and artistic quality to the New World, and it is because of the efforts of numerous artists like Henry and Caroline in dozens of cities across America from 1875 to 1925 that America herself grew from cultural adolescence into the cultural maturity of the later twentieth century.

**FOOTNOTES**

1. This biographical information on the Arbenz family derives primarily from clippings from old Wheeling newspapers (both German and English) and Arbenz personal papers which Henrietta Arbenz Fulks, a daughter of Henry J. Arbenz, made available to the writer.
2. See the accounts in the Wheeling Register for 30 December 1906 and the Intelligencer for 28 December 1906.
3. "Wheeling Conservatory of Music," Journal of Fine Arts, VIII (June, 1897), 17. The same account of Arbenz's training is found in the Catalogue of the Wheeling Conservatory of Music, [1896].
4. Some later accounts in newspapers and other sources seem to imply that Henry remained at Stuttgart for an additional year as a teacher.
in the conservatory. However, the certificate clearly indicates that his teaching was concurrent with his studies. Perhaps later references to seven and not six years of study are counting his work during the summer of 1889 as a "year."


7. A good account of the dispute is in the *Intelligencer* for 9 October 1883.

8. *Intelligencer*, 31 December 1883 and 1 January 1884.


10. *Intelligencer*, 16 July 1885. One wonders if the omission of violas was a misprint, since the instrumentation otherwise is rather complete. Also, this detailed listing of the instruments is not quite as large as the "42 Musicians" heralded in the advertisements for the festival which ran in the Wheeling papers.

11. Among the Arbenz papers given to the writer by Henrietta Fulks.


13. *Intelligencer*, 20 December 1889.

14. Several Conservatory programs, including this one, are among the Arbenz papers.

15. Deed Book No. 94, p. 346 in the Ohio County Clerk of Courts office.

16. Deed Book No. 126, p. 146 in the Ohio County Clerk of Courts office.


18. From the program in the Arbenz papers.


20. See the family listing in the obituaries for Caroline Arbenz in the Wheeling papers for 31 January 1931; a photo of Caroline is in the *Wheeling Sunday News* for 1 February.


22. Cited earlier in this study.


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**WHEELING HIGH SCHOOL**

"... FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE YOUTH OF WHEELING"

**By H. LAWRENCE JONES**

As our community enjoys the nostalgia about the heritage of Wheeling High School, as that noble building is being leveled and replaced by a new medical building, it is instructive to examine that time in our past when there was a Wheeling High School before there was a Wheeling High School.

**Wheeling High School Before Wheeling High School**

In fact there was a Wheeling High School that predates an Ohio County School System. The first Wheeling High School was created by the Board of Education of the Wheeling Independent School District when it purchased the Maxwell property in the 2100 block of Market Street in 1898. After remodeling the structure on that site, the Board used it as a high school. It met the need at a time when less than 5 percent of America's sixteen-year-olds were in school, compared to today when over 90 percent of our sixteen-year-olds continue their education beyond the basics.¹

**Board Passes a Resolution**

In just a few years, however, it became evident that this remodeled building wasn't large enough to accommodate the number of students wanting more classes, more library books and a greatly expanded course offering.²

The Board of Education, composed of 21 prominent men, appointed a subcommittee on Buildings and Grounds which met on December 11, 1903, deliberated, and generated a report that was submitted at the December 17, 1903 meeting of the Board. The Buildings and Grounds Committee was composed of Misters Williams, McConnell, Battelle, Exley, Monroe, and Nessitt, and was charged to report if a need existed for a new high school building and what suitable sites existed.³

The report of the committee was in the form of the following resolution: "That it is the sense of this Board that the present high school building is inadequate for its purpose and that a new building should be erected to take its place at the earliest opportunity."⁴

With the resolution came the recommendation to consider five separate potential sites for the magnificent building they envisioned. Try to picture the Wheeling High you knew situated on each of these sites. The first was the northwest corner of Chapline and 14th Streets.
Today the Riley Law Building occupies some of that space. The school would have extended to the alley north of 14th Street and faced the Ft. Henry Club. The second site was the northeast corner of 14th and Chapline Streets and would have occupied that same Ft. Henry Club location. The third site was also on Chapline Street, in the same block, extending from the Court Theater on the north to the alley on the south, the present site of Black's Stereo, a car lot and the Aul Building. Again on Chapline Street, the area between Alley 17 and Alley 18 on the west side, was examined as site four, and was the eventual choice. Finally, the Committee recommended examination of site five, which was located on the north-west corner of 22nd and Chapline Streets. Today that is the site of the St. John's United Church of Christ.

On February 16, 1904 the Committee again reported to the Board, this time listing the cost of each proposed site. These costs varied from $65,000 to $93,000. After considerable debate, and numerous motions, the whole matter was referred back to the Committee.

Mr. Dudley, not a committee member, proposed a new site on 20th and Chapline Streets, at the May 19, 1904 Board meeting. Dr. Reed countered with a proposal to investigate an additional site on Eoff Street. Dr. Armbrrecht moved to examine the existing building site on Market Street. Only Dr. Reed's motion passed.

The June 2, 1904 meeting found the Board reflecting on the $57,000 cost of the Eoff Street properties and tabling the matter as too expensive. It was almost a full year before the need for a new high school surfaced at a Board meeting, and did so on April 20, 1905, this time in the form of a motion by Mr. Reymann to appoint a three member committee to investigate the adequacy of the present building and to advise accordingly. Those appointed were Misters Reymann, Stoezter, and Armbrrecht.

Their report of June 15, 1905 confirmed the earlier finding that a new building was needed “at the earliest opportunity” and further suggested the First Christian Church property and residences as a site. This motion was adopted and Mr. Dudley's motion to tax the citizens to pay for the new school was also passed. At this point it appeared that a new school was imminent.

A month later, on July 6, 1905, the Board discovered it had an offering price of $76,000, which it considered excessive, and an even split on whether to condemn the property. The result was a further tabling of the issue. The First Christian Church responded on November 20, 1905 with a counter offer to the Board of $50,000. The Board declined.

Three days later, November 23, 1905, a special meeting for considering a site for the high school resulted in a consideration of a site on Eoff and Chapline Streets between 12th and 13th Streets. But on November 25, 1905, only two days later, the Board, after many motions and proposals, put the matter in the hands of a committee of five, Misters Rogers, Exley, Williams, McKee, and Halter.

Finally on December 19, 1905 it became clear that no agreement could be met on a site for the school and that all other school business was suffering during the debate. Nevertheless, the whole matter went back to committee, which is where it languished until January 28, 1907, when it surfaced again, brought out by a committee now composed of Misters Kinghorn, Sturn, Cummins, and original members Haller, Monroe, and Williams. By May 15, 1907 a resolution was passed complete with current site and bond issue election date.

On July 16, 1907 the bond issue passed with the following results:

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<th>DISTRICTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>360</td>
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<td>Madison</td>
<td>472</td>
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<td>Clay</td>
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<td>Union</td>
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<td>Ritchie</td>
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The bond issue required a 3/5 majority, which it received by 275 votes. It is interesting to note this vote did not include any votes for or against the school by women since, of course, they did not have the right to vote. The National Bank of West Virginia of Wheeling was appointed trustee for the sale of the bonds and management of the proceeds.

Finally, on May 21, 1908, five years of debate and discussion came to a close, and properties were purchased. Henry Kraft received $15,000. Louis Conrad - $3,456.37, Ludwig Leinawebber - $11,703.16, Sophia Kettler - $10, 936.33, Sophia Bachmann - $6,607.25, and Charles F. Bachmann - $3,556.58.

By December 11, 1908, Mr. Henry Robrecht had completed his contract by tearing down the old buildings on the new site. At that same meeting, samples of represed brick were viewed and approved as acceptable for the new building. These bricks are now in the proud possession of Wheeling High Alumni. Construction commenced shortly thereafter, and by April 18, 1910, the Committee on Buildings and Grounds, who had labored so diligently to make the new Wheeling High School a reality, was instructed to have charge of the removal of the Board's property from the old to the new high school.
The New Wheeling High School

The building they took possession of was one of the finest in the country. It was constructed of cut stone and brick, three stories high, with a full basement. The front of the building, facing Chapline Street, had its main entrance in the center with three Ionic columns of the Greek order of architecture on each side, extending from the first level to the third story ceiling. The upper wall contained a large cut stone cornice and a parapet along the front of the building and along the north end from Chapline Street to Alley C. The front of the building was symmetrical about the front entrance. The windows in recess behind the columns were masonry arches of stone and brick of the Roman or semi-circular design. In 1912, a fire, which started in the basement, destroyed part of the north portion of the building. When repairs were made, the north end was extended to and parallel with Alley 17, which provided more rooms and enlargement of the auditorium. After the new high school was completed, the Board constructed the Wheeling Public Library on the site of the original high school, on the Maxwell property. The Board further constructed in the mid-twenties, a third floor over the library and built a bridge to the additional seven rooms provided. In 1941, an addition was built to the south end of the building.

Principals

The principals that served at the Wheeling Highs were:

Dr. H.B. Work 1897-1905
Mr. C.B. Briles 1905-1914
Mr. H.B. Ogers 1914-1915
Mr. H.B. Johns 1915-1924
Mr. I.E. Ewing 1924-1946
Mr. W.W. Keylor 1946-1954
Mr. Roy S. Kerns 1954-1965
Mr. H.E. Blayney 1965-1973
Ms. Phyllis Beneke 1973-1976

Years of Service

During its 66 years of service Wheeling High School saw its sons serve and die in World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. It annually graduated hundreds of skilled youth who have made and are still making their mark on Wheeling, the state, and the nation. The building and its dedicated and loving staff provided the citizens of Wheeling with the best educational offerings that could be obtained. The cornerstone that adorned it for 66 years was eloquent in its simplic-

city, “Erected For the Benefit of the Youth of Wheeling.”

With Warwood, McKinley, and Triadelphia High Schools, which had equally distinguished heritages, Wheeling High School merged in 1976 to form the new comprehensive Wheeling Park High School. Like its predecessor, this descendant also went through considerable birthing trauma. Like the Wheeling High School of 1909, it was debated, argued over, and wandered about, looking for a site. It has inherited a tradition of providing for its students the best possible education the citizens of our community can provide. Like its predecessor, it must continue to live up to those expectations. Wheeling Park High School’s selection as a finalist in the National Schools of Excellence competition gives evidence to the citizens of Wheeling and Ohio County that the spirit of Wheeling High lives on.

NOTES

1. Levering C. Bonar, A Collection About Ohio County Schools, November 15, 1981.
2. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
15. Bonar.
CONTRIBUTORS

EDWARD C. WOLF received his B.A. from Capital University in 1963, the M.A. from Northwestern University in 1955, and the Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1960. He has been on the faculty of West Liberty State College since 1960. He has published articles in Musical Quarterly, Journal of Research In Music Education, Journal of Church Music, West Virginia History, Upper Ohio Valley Historical Review, The AGO/RCCO Magazine, and German-American Studies. He has presented numerous papers at scholarly meetings.

H. LAWRENCE JONES received his B.A. from Marshall University, the M.A. and Ed.D. from West Virginia University. He has been a counselor for Ohio County Schools 1973-present and is an Adjunct Professor at West Virginia University. He has published articles in West Virginia Review of Educational Research, School Psychologist Journal, and Military Police Journal.