



HISTORY OF ECONOMY BOROUGH

Economy's history as a community began in 1827 when Economy Township was formed from the southern part of New Sewickley Township. Economy village had been founded by the Harmony Society just two years earlier, and the increase in population within the area warranted the change. Since the energetic Harmonists worked together to develop intensive cultivation and various manufacturing activities on their lands, Economy village would soon have its own township of Harmony, erected from Economy Township in 1851.



The balance of Economy Township remained as it had been, a sparsely populated rural community. The area was settled in the 1790's by the Ullrich, Barto, and Davis families, followed by many others, who were mostly Germans from Alsace, Wittenburg, and Bavaria. The area where John Ullrich made his home became known as Wall Rose, a crossroads village remaining today. Other villages developed along the rivers, and these eventually incorporated as the boroughs of Baden and Conway.



The discovery of the Economy oil field in the 1890's brought major changes to the township. Wallace City, just north of the township line in New Sewickley, became the center of the booming oil industry. More than one hundred wells were drilled in the field, which extended from the Pfaff farm in Economy north to Big Knob in New Sewickley. The twelve square mile oil field produced as much as 45,000 barrels of oil

a day during peak production years. The oil was under great pressure, and many of the wells produced without pumping. The boom brought construction of boarding houses, livery stables, shops and stores, in addition to drilling rigs, tanks and all sorts of shacks and buildings. Some evidence of the oil industry remains in Tevebaugh Hollow. By 1910, the oil boom had reached its peak, and then quickly declined.



Economy's population began to increase with the post war period. In the late 1950's, construction began on Northern Lights Shopping Center, the first large shopping center in Beaver County, located in Economy between Conway and Baden.

In 1957, in order to preserve the boundaries of the township and to prevent further annexation by surrounding communities, the residents of Economy Township petitioned for borough status. On January 1, 1958, the new form of government was adopted and Economy became officially known as Economy Borough with a Burgess-Council government.

From the time of its incorporation as a township in 1827 until it became a borough in 1958, Economy Township was governed by a three-man Board of Supervisors. In the early days there was no police department, no fire department, no vandalism or shoplifting problems, but there were often impassable roads, axle-deep in mud or snow. The township's primary concern was the building and maintenance of roads.



Supervisors' meetings were held in various places over the years. They were held at the Election House in Wallrose, in individual homes, and later at the Economy School, the Fire Hall, the Grange, and rented space in the Shopping Center. Borough business was conducted in a small, cramped storeroom in Northern Lights Shopping Center until 1971 when the Municipal Building was completed.



In 1958 when Economy became a borough, Paul R. Merriman was elected Burgess and the following Councilmen were elected: William Livitski, Fred Bohn, Fred Engel, Dennis Poling, Arthur Cress, Albert Amsler and Frank Westerman. When Fred Bohn resigned his position as Councilman due to a job transfer, Kenneth E. Campbell was appointed to complete the term of Fred Bohn and was then elected to Council for a four-year term. From 1962 until he resigned on March 14, 2000, Kenneth E. Campbell served as Mayor. Felicia Polliard served as the first borough secretary until 1973 when she retired.

Elected members of the current Borough Council are: Ronald R. Rock, President; Nick Gnarra, Vice President; Larry Googins; Arthur Mutschler; Audrey Mutschler; Renee Raymer; and Donald Sivy. The present Mayor is David N. Poling (the son of Dennis Poling, one of the first Borough Councilmen). Randy S. Kunkle is Borough Manager and Susan A. Blum is the Borough Secretary.

In recent years, Economy Borough's growth has been remarkable as rural areas are converted to suburban housing developments. However, the borough has preserved its rural integrity and charm. Three local parks and picnic areas are maintained, and the borough also hosts Old Economy County Park, a large popular recreation area with a recently completed swimming pool and abundant summer activities.

Economy's children attend schools in the Ambridge Area School District. A new elementary school, opened in 2002, and the junior high school are located in Economy Borough, as well as Quigley High School, operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh.