



1877 - 1989





## THE OLD HIGH SCHOOL

This picture was printed in the 1926 Comet Yearbook and the 1953 Caravan Yearbook of the West Pittston High School. "The Old High School" is in the center with the 1877 bell mounted in the tower. The Warren Street building is on the left. The Linden Street Building, on the right, is still standing. A new facade was constructed in the late thirties on the front of this building.



# WARRIOR VICTORY BELL

## 1877 - 1989

This bronze bell was forged in 1877 in a foundry in Troy, New York. It is believed the bell was first installed in the tower of "The Old High School" on the corner of Wyoming and Montgomery Avenues, the site of the present Wyoming Area Middle School North. This site was formerly the Peter Polen farm. In 1869, the West Pittston Academy opened on this site with 300 pupils. The Academy Building and site were purchased by the West Pittston School Board in 1874 for \$28,000.00. In 1878, the first high school class graduated from this school.

The Warren Street building was constructed in 1882 for \$8,664.00.

The Linden Street Building, which still stands today, was erected in 1890 at a cost of \$24,807.00.

The Old High School and Warren Street Buildings were demolished in 1925 to make way for the new high school building. The new building was opened in the fall of 1927.

The 1877 bell was installed in an enclosure on the roof of the new high school just behind the portico on Montgomery Avenue.

Until 1966, the bell was rung regularly to announce the start of school for the morning and afternoon sessions. The first person to ring the bell was probably Mr. Tom Nattras, the first head custodian. Mr. Joseph "Mac" McGarry continued the tradition. Mr. Elmer Armstrong was the last man to ring the bell prior to the Wyoming Area High School moving to the new building in Exeter in 1975. Mr. Armstrong took particular delight in announcing the start of the new year by ringing this bell at midnight on New Years Eve.

Until 1975, it was traditional for the football team, band and students to gather on the steps of the school after every football victory to honor the team with the singing of the Alma Mater and closing the celebration with the pealing of the bell.

Since 1975, the bell has been silent.

This year, the Wyoming Area Football Parents Association undertook the project of moving the bell to the stadium. On Saturday, August 12, 1989. Mr. John Walsh of Walsh Steel Service Co. lowered the bell from the roof of the Middle School North, and with the bell suspended from his crane, proudly walked along side the bell down Wyoming Avenue to its new home. Jack Walsh is a 1979 graduate of Wyoming Area and played the half back position on the 1978 football team. The bell site at the stadium was prepared by Thomas Kearns, Charles Karcutskie, Leonard Insalaco, and Joseph Gillespie, members of the Wyoming Area Football Parents Association.

Tonight, September 8, 1989, before the football game between the Wyoming Area Warriors and Tunkhannock Area Tigers, the 1877 Victory Bell will again be commissioned to ring loud and clear for our student athletes' victories.

The Captains of the 1989 Warriors, John Kearns, Jude Donato and John Nocito will represent the student body in ringing the bell for the first time in its new setting.

The Victory Bell will again peal - A Wyoming Area sports tradition continues.

### Wyoming Area Football Parents Association

Tom Kearns	.....	President
Leonard Insalaco	.....	1st Vice President
Mary Ann Fosko	.....	2nd Vice President
Pat Kearns	.....	Secretary
Mary Ann Speece	.....	Treasurer
Barbara Stahley	.....	Financial Secretary
Vicky Wierbowski	.....	Publicity
Roberta Levandoski	.....	Special Events Chairman



## **WARRIOR VICTORY BELL**

**1877 - 1989**

This bell peals in honor of all Wyoming Area Athletes who have played on this field.

*1989 Wyoming Area Football Parents Association*

For the 1990 season, a permanent tower will be constructed to house the bell. The tower will be dedicated in honor of Clifford C. Melberger, who was a lifelong resident of West Pittston. He was graduated from West Pittston High School in 1933 and captained the football team. His record of scoring six touchdowns in one game still stands. He later served as a director and president of the West Pittston School Board.

The ideals that he stood for: honesty, integrity, hard work and fair play should be the attributes of all student athletes.

It is in the spirit of his memory that this bell tower will be dedicated by the Melberger Family.

### **The Sketch on the Front Cover . . .**

This sketch of the bell tower of "The Old High School" clearly showing the 1877 bell was featured on the cover of the 1926 West Pittston High School Yearbook, *The Comet*.