

## The Heights History – Abraham Kauffman

- Abraham Lincoln Kauffman was born July 4, 1866 in Annville, PA
- Brothers named George Washington and Benjamin Franklin Kauffman
- Father was a carpenter and parents were members of United Brethren Church
- Learned upholstery trade for carriages and coaches; initially worked in Altoona
- Returned to Lebanon doing upholstery and carpet laying
- Mid-1890's went into business for himself selling carpets and furniture in Lebanon
- 1906 - Ran for Board of Managers in Camp Meeting
- 1907 - bought 20 acres east of Camp Meeting for \$4000
- **1907 - initiated development of a new resort in Mt. Gretna - "The Willows"**
  - Hotel
  - Ice house
  - "The Gables" - presented silent movies and dance club
  - General Store with bakery and homemade ice cream
  - Businesses open on Sundays, which was not approved of by Camp Meeting leaders
- **Built Willows Bungalows in 1927**
  - Extension of the Kauffman Hotel, intended to accommodate families
  - Meals available at the Hotel
- **The Heights - early 1920's**
  - R. E. Hartman and Emanuel Keener bought land next to the Willows to use for timber
  - Developed 62 acres with sewer, water and roads.
  - In early 1920's Kauffman purchased this land plus an additional 98 acres
  - Named "Kauffman Heights"
  - Sold ~23 lots and erected cottages

## The Heights History – Abraham Kauffman

- **Laurel Park - Amusement Park**
  - 1917 - Coleman Amusement Park and Lake were sold
  - Kauffman had wanted to purchase them, but was not successful
  - Kauffman bought 53 undeveloped acres to open his own park
  - Laurel Park opened July 4, 1926
    - Large roller coaster - Built by Philadelphia Toboggan Company for \$13,600
    - Million-gallon swimming pool
  - Midge and Gene Otto hired to run the park
  - Summers of 1926 and 1927 were rainy, and then the Depression came along
- **End of the Kauffman Era**
  - Bank foreclosed on all of Kauffman's holdings except for the family home. 1928/29
    - Bank sold off the Heights lots separately.
    - The Heights homes were the first homes built intended for year round, or long-term use.
  - Otto's ran the park, on behalf of the Bank, until 1934.
  - Store was run by Mellinger until 1940's.
  - Hotel was open until 1934, and demolished in 1940.
  - Mrs. Kauffman opened a restaurant and bar in the family home until it was sold.
  - **Abraham Kauffman died March 19, 1932.**
  - The Bungalows were sold off to private owners in 1929.
  - Jacob Stober acquired the land where Stoberdale exists today.
    - Built a bar and miniature golf course where the Mt. Gretna firehouse is today
    - Built the Stober House restaurant in 1950, which now operates as the Hideaway Restaurant.

## **The Heights History – Abraham Kauffman**

### **- 1934 - 1940**

- Clarence Shock purchased 1100 acres of forest which is now Governor Dick park. 98 of these acres from Kauffman

### **- 1949**

- United Brethren purchased the Kauffman House for dormitories for their summer camp programs. (and re-named it Hershey Hall)
- Also purchased The Gables and re-named it to Otterbein Lodge as a dormitory for the boys.

### **- 1970's**

- The Gables and the General Store were torn down because the summer church camp had moved to Gretna Glen.