



John Wilkes

1727-1797

*Early defender of political liberty,
free speech, and the rights of the people
to elect their leaders.*

DEDICATION
of the
JOHN WILKES STATUE

August 31, 1995

Wilkes University
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

John Wilkes, *Esquire*

1727-1797

In erecting a statue of John Wilkes on its campus, Wilkes University recognizes both the political career and reputation of the man that our colonial forefathers identified with in selecting in 1769 the name Wilkesbarre, as well as the name the Trustees selected in 1947 for the new four-year Wilkes College, successor to the two-year Bucknell University Junior College. However controversial he was in the England of the 1760s and 1770s, John Wilkes demonstrated a wholehearted commitment to values that helped shape the American as well as the British political systems; values that we can now see spreading throughout the globe. Freedom of the press, the right of citizens to elect their governors, the right of individuals to be free from unlawful searches and seizures, the right to petition the government and the right of citizens to have access through the press to the uncensored debates of their government were all principles that John Wilkes helped establish both for Englishmen and Americans. He did this by being at the center of these major constitutional debates with his pen, his tongue, his unusual head and face (which were the cartoonists' delight), and his own person. His time in jail, as well as his exile in France, contributed to the impact he had in broadening political liberties and participation of common citizens. "Wilkes and Liberty!" was shouted by crowds in the thousands as the forces of political democracy gathered in England on the eve of the revolution in the colonies. By choosing the name Wilkesbarre for this lovely Wyoming Valley community, Major John Durkee, president of the settlers sent out by the Susquehanna Company of Connecticut, embraced the challenge John Wilkes and Isaac Barre both posed to King George III and his ministers' policies.

When Dr. James Cope took the initiative to commission James Butler, R.A., R.W.A., F.R.B.S. to sculpt a statue of John Wilkes in recognition of his colorful and constructive tenure as Lord Mayor of London, they elected to show him holding a resolution in support of the rights of Englishmen to a just and equal representation of the people in Parliament. Among Wilkes' constituents were the London merchants whose economic ties with the colonists in America were vital to the interests of each. The imposition of taxes and tariffs on the colonies, while justified by the King's ministers as necessary to pay for the defense of America, helped trigger the resentments that led to America's War of Independence. Wilkes supported the colonists because he believed they deserved their rights as Englishmen, and were unrepresented in the Parliament imposing the taxes and tariffs.

This copy of the original, award-winning statue by James Butler, with permission granted by the Trustees of the John Wilkes Memorial Fund in England, was made possible through the generosity of Wilkes University Trustee Stephen Sordoni and the law firm of Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald. The statue is dedicated to three Wilkes Trustees who have contributed significantly to the growth and health of Wilkes University and to the Wyoming Valley community it serves: the Honorable Max Rosenn, Senior Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit; Eugene Roth, Esquire '57; and Joseph J. Savitz, Esquire '48; all associated with the distinguished law firm Judge Rosenn helped to create.

Dedication of John Wilkes Statue

COMMENCEMENT — CONVOCATION 11:15 A.M.
Front Lawn — Farley Library

INTRODUCTION OF HONOREES Christopher N. Breiseth
President

THE HONORABLE MAX ROSENN
EUGENE ROTH, Esquire '57
JOSEPH J. SAVITZ, Esquire '48

GREETINGS Stephen Sordoni
Member, Board of Trustees

Arthur H. Cash
*Distinguished Professor, Department of English
The State University of New York at New Paltz*

Sir Alistair Hunter, KCMG
British Consul General, U.S.A.

James Butler, R.A., R.W.A., F.R.B.S.
Sculptor

UNVEILING OF THE STATUE

MUSICAL INTERLUDE "*God Save the Queen*" Ferdinand Beyer

ADDRESS Christopher N. Breiseth

*LUNCHEON 1:00 p.m.
Arnaud C. Marts Center

JOHN WILKES SYMPOSIUM 2:30 p.m.

Arthur H. Cash
Harold E. Cox

Charles Petrillo, Esquire '66

Christopher N. Breiseth, *Moderator*

Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts

*PICNIC SUPPER IN HONOR OF JAMES BUTLER 6:00 p.m.
Charles Burns, Sr. '35 Alumni Tower

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE 8:00 p.m.

James Butler, *Sculptor*

Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts

**By Invitation Only*

John Wilkes Symposium

COMMENTS The Honorable Max Rosenn
Senior Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit

PARTICIPANTS:

ARTHUR H. CASH has been designated as a Distinguished Professor in the Department of English at the State University of New York at New Paltz. He has authored several papers as well as presented lectures dealing with John Wilkes. He has recently completed a critique of Wilkes' "Essay on Woman" and has completed the first third of a biography on John Wilkes. Dr. Cash earned his Ph.D. at Columbia University.

HAROLD E. COX is Professor and Chair of the Department of History at Wilkes University where he has served as a member of the faculty for thirty-two years. A Colonial American historian, Dr. Cox began his studies of John Wilkes while researching the political relationships between England and the Colonies during his graduate studies at the University of Virginia from which he earned his Ph.D.

F. CHARLES PETRILLO, Esquire '66 earned his J.D. degree from the Dickinson College of Law. Attorney Petrillo is a member of the Executive Committee of the Wyoming Valley Historical and Geological Society and the author of four books on regional history. He served as the guest curator at the Sordoni Art Gallery in June, 1988 for the exhibit "The Life and Times of John Wilkes and Isaac Barre."

Christopher N. Breiseth, President of Wilkes University since 1984, serves as moderator for this symposium. A historian, Dr. Breiseth received his Bachelor's degree at the University of California at Los Angeles, the B. Litt. at Oxford and the Ph.D. from Cornell.

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE James Butler, *Sculptor*

James Butler is a figurative sculptor of international reputation. A member of the Royal Academy, the Royal West of England Academy and a Fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, Mr. Butler's major bronzes have been erected in important world centers. His original statue of John Wilkes was erected in London in 1988.