



# The Tavern Log

A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society

August 2010

Volume XIX Issue 4

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The Tavern Log is published six times a year by the Miamisburg Historical Society for its members. Publication dates are available from our president or on our website.

### Submit material to:

Editor, The Tavern Log  
Miamisburg Historical Society  
P.O. Box 774  
Miamisburg, OH 45343  
or via e-mail to  
dewarrick@sbcglobal.net

The Tavern Log reserves the right to edit any material submitted.

### BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Market Square Building.

### THE HERITAGE VILLAGE

Gebhart Tavern and Kercher Cabin  
Tuesdays, May thru Oct., 2:00—5:00 pm

### Website:

[http://miamisburg.org/miamisburg\\_historical\\_society.htm](http://miamisburg.org/miamisburg_historical_society.htm)  
Webmaster: Jay Robinson



The Fox Motors Dealership, ca. 1948

## Fox Family Archives Released

By Larry Suttman

Tim Fox and his son, Josh, have agreed to release their family archives to the Miamisburg Historical Society for our historical preservation. I recently got together with Tim Fox and agreed to a working

arrangement wherein Tim would allow me access to the Fox family archives, including the family history, records, photographs and other historical documents.

Tim and Josh, in fact the entire Fox family, share a remarkable quality; history is very important to them. They consider Miamisburg history and the Fox family history to be one and the same. The amount of historical items they possess such as literature and photographs (many glass plates and lantern slides) is incredible in that it all pertains to something important, not just insignificant, trivial material. The family has also kept all sorts of tools, signs, models and Miamisburg/Fox memorabilia; enough to establish a small museum.

Work on this project has already commenced, working one parcel at a time. One group will be processed, then returned and another group of documents and photos will be received for processing. We are indeed fortunate to have access to this significant resource, and we owe Tim and Josh Fox a big "Thank You" for their foresight and generosity.

Few people realize the contributions the Fox family has made to Miamisburg since 32 of them arrived here in 1807. Miami Township's first tavern, blacksmith, sawmill and distillers were all family. Miamisburg's first church and school were built by family members, as was Miamisburg's first auto dealership. They have sold 19 different makes of automobiles over a 97 year span. Fox Motors is now operated by a 9th generation American, Josh Fox. Fox Motors has records of every sale ever made, back to the first one in 1913... including one to my granddad, Ben Suttman in 1914.

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## From the President's Desk...

By Ted Fink

The summer is passing quickly and although there is generally not a lot of activity within the Historical Society at this time of year, the Society has been busy and involved this summer. Judy Knight, again this year, made sure that we had a presence with a booth at the Miamisburg Spring Fling. We made a little money, but more importantly, we let people know of our existence in the community and encouraged new members to join. July 22<sup>nd</sup> was our picnic at the

Sycamore Trails Park. Our many thanks to Cathy Oberer for her efforts there. We have not had the picnic for the past several years and hopefully this will revive the tradition.

It has been almost a year since we dedicated the Kercher Cabin - August 30<sup>th</sup> to be exact. Since that time, both the cabin and the Gebhart Tavern have seen a lot of activity. Judy Wuerstl and her volunteers have been busy with children's programs and tours of the facilities. If you have not been to our Heritage Village at the Corner of Old Main and Lock St., I would encourage you to do so. A number of dedicated people have put a lot of effort into making this a first class exhibit.

If you need a little more incentive and want to participate in a unique experience, Mary Pat Golden, who runs the gift shop, and her husband Clyde, are spearheading a program to present "An Evening with the Gebharts". On Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, you can enjoy an evening hosted by Daniel and Mary "Polly" Gebhart at their tavern. The Goldenes and their committee are putting together a traditional dinner that would have been served during the time the tavern was operational. This will give you an opportunity to share an evening with friends and to sample the cuisine of that era. Additionally, you will be able to see firsthand the fine work that has been done to preserve our local heritage. Invitations have gone out to members, but space is limited and filling up quickly. By the time this newsletter reaches members, it is possible that reservations may already be closed. If you are interested in attending, call 847-1826 to verify seating availability.

As we move from summer to fall, we will do our best to keep you informed of all of our activities, and encourage all members to participate as much as possible. Thank you for your continued support of our efforts, and of the Miamisburg Historical Society.

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## New Bookshelves Built by Larry Suttman

Nita Petticrew gives her smile of approval on the new bookshelves that were built by Larry Suttman. The Research Room in our Market Square Building has been overflowing with our ever expanding collections. In June the beautiful and much needed, new bookcase was built and installed on the entire west wall in the Bobbye Sweny Research Room.

The metal shelves, which won't sag, provide an additional 50 feet of shelf space for the fast growing collections in this room. An unnamed donor was instrumental in helping to finance the project.

*Great Job Larry!*



## Summer Picnic a Treat!

Although the weather was warmer than we'd have liked, there was still a great turnout for our summer picnic on July 22. Cathy Oberer chaired the picnic committee and did a great job as everyone really enjoyed the good food and camaraderie at the Sycamore Trails Park shelter house.

Helping to setup and serve were Cathy Oberer, Judy Knight, Linda Bernard and Rolla Broerman. Karen Sue Daws, of Karen Sue's Restaurant, made and helped to serve the great picnic fare. Don McLaughlin was the official photographer for the event. Thanks to everyone who worked to make our summer picnic a **really** enjoyable evening!



Jim & Laura Bornhorst, Sina Rankin, Mary Weller and Phyllis & Quill Abney enjoy the picnic.

## Two Society Members Win MHS Honor Graduate Award

The Miamisburg Alumni Association this year has awarded two Miamisburg graduates the 2010 Honor Graduate Award. The two honorees are **Les Wead** and **Stan Bernard**. It just so happens that both of these men are members of our Historical Society and outstanding Miamisburg citizens. We just had to spread the word about their awards and inform all our Society members.

We'll begin with Les Wead who graduated from Miamisburg High School in 1947. After graduation he spent 4 years in the Air Force and then 4 years in the Air Force Reserves. He was one of only 15 from a class of 150 who were able to graduate from Advanced Radar Electronic Training. After the Air Force Les worked two jobs; carrying the mail and working at NCR. He also found time to be heavily involved with Cub Scouts, coach Little League and serve on the Parkview Church Board (EUB). Being a Mason, Les attained his 32nd Degree Scottish Rite in 1990.

These days we know Les for all he does for the Historical Society. He is THE historian. Besides manning the Market Square Building on Wednesdays and Saturdays, he has served on the Board and also serves on the Veteran's Committee. Les has researched and compiled volumes of historical information which he's made available in our Research Room. Of course we are forever indebted to Les for his discovery of the historic Kercher Cabin, which we have been able to save and preserve for future generations. An interesting side note: Les obtained his driver's license at the age of 13. He needed it for delivering groceries for Andy's Market.

On to Stan Bernard who graduated from Miamisburg in 1960. He has worked on a wide variety of civic committees, has been involved in everything from being a Little League coach to being a Paul Harris Fellow in Miamisburg Rotary, is a member of both our Society and Baum Opera House Association and currently serves on the board of a local bank. Stan has also served on Miamisburg's Board of Education and has supported the St. Joseph Indian School in South Dakota for over 25 years.

Through his business, Stan has not only supported the students of Mark Twain Elementary School by donating technical equipment and corrugated material, but also held hands-on work force simulations for special needs students. He served on the State of Ohio Career Education Association Business Partnership Committee and continues to be a supporter of education in Lebanon, Ohio where his business is now located.

The Miamisburg Historical Society is happy to congratulate both Les and Stan on their lifetime accomplishments. We're very proud to have both of these outstanding citizens as members of our Society.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Karen & Mirko Ilich**

**Bob Faulkner**

### New Members from the Class of '60

<b>Betsy Brough Clark</b>	<b>Mary Jo Koverman</b>
<b>Jean Hole Mason</b>	<b>Constance March</b>
<b>Ann Anderson</b>	<b>Carol Myers</b>
<b>Darlene Andes</b>	<b>Cynthia Naylor</b>
<b>Tedd Boomershine</b>	<b>Suzanne Quayle</b>
<b>Sharon Brown</b>	<b>Sandra Ruggles</b>
<b>Lois Dempsey</b>	<b>Judith Scarborough</b>
<b>Edwin Edgerton</b>	<b>Marilyn Scott</b>
<b>John Gustin</b>	<b>Larry Sharp</b>
<b>Donald Hansen</b>	<b>Sharon Vardi</b>
<b>Joyce Horner</b>	<b>Gary Wade</b>
<b>Marcia Indalecio</b>	<b>Sharon Zakar</b>
<b>Donald Johnson</b>	<b>Bobbi Zink</b>
<b>Mary Ann Kidwell</b>	

The above list adds 27 more members of the Miamisburg Class of '60 who now belong to the Miamisburg Historical Society. This brings their total to nearly 50.

***FANTASTIC!***

### **Sending Our Sympathy**

Condolences go out to Dee Stalder of Roswell, Georgia on the passing of her husband, LeRoy "Le" Stalder, on June 12. Sympathy also to Le's son, Todd, and his family who also reside in the Atlanta area.

In addition to his family, Le will be greatly missed by all his friends from Miamisburg with whom he has kept in touch over the years. He was a Miamisburg Class of '53 graduate, and also the drum major for the Miamisburg Band during his high school years.

### **Become a Member ...**

*and help preserve Miamisburg*

I would like membership in the category checked:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$5.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$25.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$500.00 (per person)

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to:  
Miamisburg Historical Society

☐ I am a new member

☐ I am renewing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Would you enjoy volunteering?

Please note your areas of interest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*(please mail to:)*

Miamisburg Historical Society  
P.O. Box 774  
Miamisburg, OH 45343-0774

## **Bobbye Sweny Retires as Head of Children's Education Committee**

She's everywhere, she's everywhere! That's certainly true of Bobbye Sweny. Somehow she manages to be an energetic contributor of her time and talents in almost every area of our Society.

Bobbye was in on the very beginning of the historical programs that we now offer to local schools. These programs began in 2002 when we had a request from Sara Berner, a third grade teacher at Bear School, for some help with teaching local history to her third grade students. Bobbye jumped right in and designed a program which has grown by leaps and bounds since then. Over the years many volunteer docents have been instrumental in carrying out and expanding her programs. Bobbye definitely gets the credit though, for advancing the quality of the Children's Program to the pinnacle that it has reached today. Her mind is always buzzing with new and creative ways to share Miamisburg history with the students.



At the end of the 2009-10 school year in May, Bobbye stepped down as official Chairperson of the Children's Education Committee. She will remain very much involved, but is handing over the leadership reins to the very capable, Judy Wuerstl. These past few years, Judy has taken on more and more duties, not only in the Children's Education Program, but also as Heritage Village Volunteer Coordinator. We think she must have been taking "Bobbye" lessons, because she too has become a very valued volunteer in many areas of the Society.

Yes, we'll still be seeing Bobbye involved with the children and in other areas as always, but beginning this fall she will take a much deserved vacation from that responsible position. Bobbye, we have the utmost respect and admiration for all you've accomplished. The children of our town have benefited greatly from your programs.

**JOB WELL DONE!**

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## **Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War**

By Carol O'Connell

Miamisburg welcomed a group of Korean War veterans from Missouri with a tour of the city on June 25. The first stop on the tour was the Mound Museum which houses a document collection and artifacts of the years "The Mound" was in operation. Museum volunteers, Bernie Kokenge, Dick Madding, Bob Armbruster, Maxine Vest, Ken Foster and George Mafous led the group through the museum sharing their knowledge and work experience. Festooning the front entrance was red, white and blue bunting accented with flowers.

The tour continued with a visit to the Adena Indian Mound, however, no one wanted to climb to the top. They were awed by the beautiful homes along "Millionaires' Row".\* We stopped at Heritage Village to find Mary 'Polly' Gebhart, aka Judy Wuerstl, waiting to greet us in her pioneer attire. Judy stepped on the coach and gave a summary of the history of the Tavern and our city's heritage.

The coach moved on to view the site of the Miami Erie Canal and the industries that provided goods to load on the canal boats. The next stop was Fox Motors where Tim Fox stepped on the coach to give an overview of the Fox family heritage and their contributions to the city's growth and development. He had on display one of the restored cars - a 1954 Dodge Royal. He chose this car because it would have been the newest top-of-the-line Dodge cars coming off the assembly line when the men were discharged from the service. The Korean War Armistice was signed July 27, 1953.

\*Linden Avenue was referred to as "Millionaires' Row" because of the large homes.

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# Heritage Village News

By Judy Wuerstl, Heritage Village Volunteer Coordinator

Have you stopped by the Heritage Village lately? The flowers and plantings are spectacular, thanks to the hard work of our "gardener", Tom Zimpfer. The flowers were donated by Burkhardt's Greenhouse and the mulch by Ace Hardware. We thank them for their generosity.

The Miami Conservancy District, City of Miamisburg and City of Franklin sponsored the "Drive Less, Live More River Ride" on Sat. morning, July 24. Bicyclists rode the bike path from Franklin to Miamisburg stopping at five locations in downtown Miamisburg. Their final stop was our Heritage Village



Bikers stop at the Tavern

where they were greeted by Judy Wuerstl, Carol O'Connell and Bobbye Sweny. We had over 58 visitors that morning. All were very interested in our historic buildings and spent time looking around and asking questions before heading back to Franklin.

Many thanks to docents who volunteered at the Heritage Village in June and July: Jay & Angie Robinson, JoAnne Brewer, Bud Colvin, Peggy Critzer, Laura Bornhorst, Marilyn Shade, Pat & Clyde Golden, Carol O'Connell, Doug Stamm, Shirley Holbrook, Annie Gilkison, Bobbye Sweny, Kathy Fortney, Diane Warrick, Jeanette Belvo and Judy Wuerstl. We also welcomed new docent, Barbara Daud.



Greeters, Carol O'Connell and Judy Wuerstl

## Fox Family Archives Released

(Continued from Page 1)

Most remarkable is the 'genius' of the family, old "Granddad Tom." Thomas was extraordinary as in those early times, he was an automotive genius. He invented, right here in Miamisburg, a successful gasoline tractor complete with a new type transmission of his own design, which he demonstrated by plowing all day long for interested farmers and onlookers. His tractor, of which he built three working models, was so successful that Henry Ford quickly purchased all rights to the tractor!

Tom didn't stop with the tractor. He continued on to invent a power transmission clutch that proved highly successful. He received patents for improvements to power hammers and air compressors. Show him a power tool and he could make it better. Countless inventions resulted in Thomas owning fifty patents. Quite an accomplishment for a man who never went to high school.



The Fox family still has the original tractor #1 in their showroom. Stop by and see it.



## September Marks Beginning of Our Fall Program Season

By Linda Bernard, Program Chairperson

Mark your calendar for Thurs., September 23 at 7:00 pm. Jerry Harmeyer of the Chautauqua Community Center will kick off our fall season with a program on the **History of Chautauqua**. He'll have a video/DVD with lots of pictures to show, dating all the way back to 1901.

Do you have memories of Chautauqua? Come join us at the Market Square Building as we reminisce and learn the whole story about this nearby community.

Our Society offers a great variety of FREE programs. Take advantage of them and bring along a friend. The public is always welcome and we guarantee a good time!

## Gebhart Tavern Dinner Scheduled for August 21

We're really looking forward to our newest event, a dinner at the Gebhart Tavern. Mary Pat Golden proposed this idea to the Board many months ago and has chaired the committee to make it a reality.

Invitations have been mailed to Society members and as this newsletter goes to the printer, seating reservations have been filling up quickly. If you are interested in attending, call 847-1826 to verify remaining available seating.

## Condolences to the Zech family

Long time member of the Miamisburg Historical Society, Betty Zech, passed away on July 15. Betty was a much loved and loyal volunteer at the Society who worked faithfully in our gift shop for many years.

She will be sadly missed by her many friends and members of the Zech and Critzer families. Our sincere sympathy goes out to all.

## Congratulations!

A very hearty congratulations goes out to the Historical Society members who celebrated their **75th Miamisburg High School Class Reunion** in June. Virginia Shank Kinderdine and Fred Loy were two of six who represented the Class of '35 at the 2010 MHS Alumni Association Meeting.

The mother of Historical Society member, Sherry Barrett, was another of the six present at Alumni to celebrate with the Class of '35. Her name is Mildred Kehrle Peace. Mildred's family had 4 generations present at the Alumni Meeting (all MHS grads).



Kinderdine

Loy

Peace

## UPCOMING FALL EVENT

**Historical Society Annual Meeting  
and Canal Days Dinner**

**Thursday, October 28, 2010**

*Further information in October Tavern Log.*

## Sending Apologies

Janet Wead, Co-Chairperson of our 2010 Quilt Show, would like to send sincere apologies to Bill Schmidt of the Dayton Daily News. Bill was kind enough to do a great article about the Quilt Show in the *Neighbors* section of the paper and it was a wonderful piece of advertisement for the show.

In our published "thank you" to all who helped, we neglected to include his name. Bill, we appreciate all you did to promote our 2010 Quilt Show.

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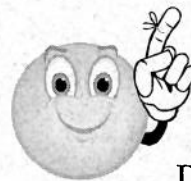


## Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War

*(Continued from Page 5)*

Finally, waiting to greet the veterans as they stepped off the coach was Mayor Dick Church with the American Legion Post 165 Honor Guard. This show of respect for the veterans was indeed the kind of spirit for which Miamisburg is known. They appreciated the honor facilitated by Randy Staley and Jim Church (Korean War Navy Veteran).

It was time for a repast at Bullwinkles. The mayor stepped in and formally welcomed the vets by telling them the story of how Miamisburg became known as the Star City. Afterward, the group continued on to Dayton to take the Aviation Trail ending at the United States Air Force Museum. That evening all veterans of the Korean War were honored at the Tattoo celebration. All who were involved in hosting the group were pleased to have the opportunity to honor the Korean War Veterans who fought to preserve our legacy of freedom.



## Don't Forget...

If you're a shopper at any of the Dorothy Lane Markets, be sure to sign up for their "Good Neighbor Program." We've outlined this program previously in *The Tavern Log*, but it's always worth a repeat.

Just fill out a one-time form at any Dorothy Lane Market to participate in their contribution program. You'll be issued a card to present at the register whenever you shop and after a deductible amount has been reached, 1% of your purchase is donated to our Historical Society at the end of each year.

It's an easy way to help out the Society and it doesn't cost you an extra dime. We've participated in the program for quite a few years now and that year-end check is an extra bonus that helps to defray our operating expenses at Market Square.