



# The Tavern Log

A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society

August 2006

Volume XV Issue 4

## MIAMISBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS & BOARD

### Officers:

Phil Johnson, President  
Les Wead, Jr., Vice-President  
Cathy Oberer, Secretary  
Phyllis Abney, Treasurer  
Joe Steffen, Curator

### Board:

JoAnne Brewer  
Dick Church Jr.  
Paul Schultz  
Randy Staley  
Diane Warrick  
Laura Bornhorst, Past President  
Jim Bornhorst, Past President

### Committee Chairs:

Jim Bornhorst, Facility Maintenance  
Laura Bornhorst, Special Events  
JoAnne Brewer, Membership  
Dick Church, City Liaison  
Paul Petticrew, HRRS  
Paul Schultz, Programs  
Randy Staley, Veterans  
Bobbie Sweny, Children's Programs  
and Education  
Diane Warrick, Tavern Log Editor  
Les Wead, Jr., Market Square Operations  
Publicity, Sue Montesano  
Displays - Open

The Tavern Log is published six times a year by the Miamisburg Historical Society for its members.

A list of deadlines and publication dates is available from the board 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@aol.com

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.

### GEBHART TAVERN

Wednesdays, May thru Sept., 2:00—5:00 pm

### website:

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

Webmaster: Jay Robinson

## Jacob Kercher Log Cabin Identified



As a result of some very fine research work by our able Vice President, Les Wead, we have positively identified a home located at 14 West Ferry Street as one of the oldest, if not the oldest house in Miamisburg!

Montgomery County Archives Records show that the land on which this house stands was originally purchased as a part of the Symmes property by Dr. John Hole. It was subsequently sold to Jacob Kercher who built a log structure on the site in 1810 (8 years before our city was platted as a village along the banks of the Great Miami River).

Jacob Kercher was one of the original four founding fathers of the city; the other three being Emanuel Gebhart, Dr. John Treon and his uncle, Peter Treon. Records show that Elizabeth Kercher was born in this house in 1810 and was reportedly the first child born in Miamisburg.

The basic structure is a two story building about 20 by 21 feet with a later addition of about the same size. Until recently, the home was covered with white aluminum siding, but that has been removed exposing an earlier siding consisting of a tar-paper material looking somewhat like brick. Beneath this material is what appears to be the original wood lap siding which entirely covers the supporting log structure. Unfortunately, this historic home is included in the area which the city is razing in preparation for development of the new "Riverfront Park".

*Continued on page 6*

*Thank You!*

A big thank you goes out to Carl and Carol Zimmerman for hosting our Annual Summer Picnic at their beautiful country home. In spite of earlier rains, attendance was great and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening with wonderful picnic fare provided by Chef Paul.

**We sincerely appreciate all their efforts in making our picnic a great success!**

## From the President's Desk...

Deja vu! As I looked over my report in the last issue of *The Tavern Log* (June 2006), I noted that the lead sentence read, "*This has been a busy, busy time of the year for your Historical Society!*" Well, things haven't let up since then. Between the planning and execution of our second annual **Historic Bicycles Exhibition**, our active participation in the exciting **Weekend on Wheels** and our visit by **Ray and Lori Baronas** and their historic **Hatfield Buggyabout** automobile, there has been little time to relax. Let's not forget the well attended Annual Picnic which was planned by Past Presidents, Laura and Jim Bornhorst, and hosted by Karl and Carol Zimmerman at their lovely farm just west of town. All of these activities required a lot of work on the part of many volunteers as well as by the responsible Board Members.

I am always amazed at the number of unique resources we have right here in the Star City. Would you believe that the fantastic collection of bicycles we had on display at the Market Square Building all came from folks within "spit'n distance" of Miamisburg? Most of these "wheels" came from folks who participated in last year's exhibition – but a number of new folks simply stepped forward and offered to share their unique "toys" with the community.

Not long ago a man walked into our headquarters at the Market Square Building to inquire about photos of the old high school building. Turns out we do have some nice exterior shots of that lovely old building, but none of the interior. As we discussed old photos and old friends, I brought up the subject of the old glass negatives and glass "lantern slides" which had come into our possession within the last 3 months (Ref. article in the June Issue of *The Tavern Log*). I explained to him that one of our needs today is for someone to scan all of those materials and make digital files from which we can print high quality photos of the subjects contained therein. With no further "prodding" this gentleman spoke up and said, "*I can do that!*" Within a few days he returned with several samples of the work he had done on a variety of sample glass negatives.

Needless to say, we put him to work as another of our valued volunteers and even suggested to him that he should consider becoming a member of our Miamisburg Historical Society. (Not a requirement to volunteer!) There are other jobs to be done in this organization that could use some of your talents and skills. Some of these can be done in your home, but others may require that you spend 2-3 hours once or twice a month at the Market Square Building or the Gebhart Tavern Museum. Talk with any member of the Board about the opportunities to serve. You'll be glad you did!

*Phil*

Phil Johnson  
President

### Become a Member ... and help preserve Miamisburg

I would like membership in  
the category checked:

☐ Student \$5.00  
☐ Individual \$15.00  
☐ Family \$25.00  
☐ Sponsor \$50.00  
☐ Patron \$100.00  
☐ 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 \_\_\_\_\_

(please mail to:)

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

## Crosley Field Remembered

Our July General Meeting provided an enjoyable and interesting look back at the old Crosley Field in Cincinnati. Greg Rhodes, Executive Director of the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame and Museum, presented an excellent program including photos of the park, stories about the players and the history of the Crosley Field site which was home to the Reds until 1970.

All those attending helped themselves to popcorn and lemonade before the presentation began, adding to the "ambiance" of the evening.

The program brought back many memories and also a few humorous stories from the audience. While getting an autograph from Ted Kluszuski, Karen Schnapp told how she took the chance to feel his bicep. Quite impressive, she remarked!

In closing the program, Mr. Rhodes answered questions and added additional anecdotes involving his experiences in meeting and interviewing some of the famous baseball players from the Crosley Field era.

### *Don't miss another program!*

They are free and open to the public. Mark your calendar for the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm and take advantage of just one of the many historically inspired activities that we offer at the Market Square Building.



## From Our Vets Committee

From time to time we get questions such as "How do you properly retire an American Flag?" The United States Flag Code, Title 4, section 8k states, "The Flag, when in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem of display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning." Flags that are soiled may be laundered or dry cleaned. The National Flag Foundation also recommends mending tattered flags if possible.

Should you decide to retire a flag, you may take it to the American Legion Post 165 at 35 North Main Street. For public convenience, inside the North door, off the parking lot you will find a (retired) mail box painted red, white and blue for flag drop offs. At least annually the Legion performs a Flag Retirement Ceremony. It only takes a minute to stop by and drop off your flag.

*Fly your flag!*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

LeRoy Stalder

Thomas Ross

Jan Beedle

Dave & Staci Anderson

## How high is your Miamisburg IQ?



### *The August Pop Quiz:*

**A partial excavation of the Miamisburg Mound occurred in what year?**

**A. 1869**

**B. 1891**

**C. 1923**

*Answer on Page 4*





## Notes From The Curator

2006 is a special year for my wife and her friends who graduated from Miamisburg High School in 1956. They recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation from Miamisburg High School. Where did the time go?

The class members had two days of celebrating by having special outings, followed by being one of the honored classes at the Miamisburg Alumni Dinner/Dance and Meeting. Many good stories about the good old times were shared.

I took a look at my wife's 1956 MHS yearbook to see what was going on in that year. Her Mirus was full of personal notes from her good friends. The most popular notes were "Lots of luck", "Best wishes for success and happiness", "To a nice girl", "To a sweet lady" (need to check this out) and the old standard, "Let's keep in touch". For a good number of those attending, it was the first time they had been in touch for 50 years.

Looking further at the old yearbook, I found photos of many teachers I had at Miamisburg High School. These pictures brought good and bad memories. Some of the teachers were tough and only in later years did I really appreciate the efforts they made to help me in life. Some of the special teachers I remembered were Lester Heistand, Ruth Connor, Helen Reed, Frederick Roehm, May Schmidt and Mr. Mitler.

According to the Mirus, I noted that the Class Officers for 1956 were Paul Simmons, Dave Brueckner, Harriette Bliss, Jim Weisgarber and Arlene Overholser. Paul Simmons attended the reunion, coming all the way from Oregon where he now resides. Arlene Overholser came from North Carolina.

The Class Play was "Drum of Death". According to those involved, it was an exciting mystery. Dr. H. Grady Shoffner addressed the class at Baccalaureate. The top members of the class were Sharon Donahue, Judy Urich and Miriam Shoffner.

In the back of the 1956 Mirus are advertisements of Miamisburg businesses. Just like the moving on of the class members, the business community of Miamisburg has also changed over the years. Following are some of the familiar names of businesses who advertised in the 1956 Mirus. Time marches on as Ted's Dairy Bar, Dutcher's Sonoco, The Mary Ann Shop, Andy Schmidt's Market, First National Bank, Silberman's Drug Store and Brough's Furniture Store were just a few of the businesses listed that are no longer part of the Miamisburg downtown.

I also must mention that a number of friends from the Class of 1956, Kaye Costello Lenz, Judy Urich Rettich, Rose Philabaum Schroeder, Joyce Mears, Miriam Shoffner Shapiro and Marsha Midlam Steffen still meet on a regular basis as good friends. The friendship starting some 50 plus years ago is still going strong.

**Only in Miamisburg!**

*Joe Steffen, Curator*

### Pop Quiz Answer

**The correct answer is A.** In 1869 an excavation attempt included a vertical shaft and two connecting horizontal tunnels. One skeleton was discovered along with other artifacts. The height of the Mound, at originally over 70 feet, was reduced approximately 5 feet by the excavation.

## Buggyabout is Star Attraction!

If you were downtown for the "Tour d'Burg" and took a stroll up First Street to Central Avenue, there was a good chance you had an opportunity to see the 1908 Hatfield Buggyabout automobile that was built right here in Miamisburg. There are only two of these rare cars known to exist today.

The current owners of the car are Ray and Lori Baronas, who live in Deerfield Massachusetts. They made a special trip all the way to Miamisburg to display their car. We owe them special thanks for coming.



The car drew lots of interest from those stopping by to look it over. Our Historical Society was very pleased at the turnout to see this special car built right here in our town.



### *Highlighting Our Historical Society*

#### **Did you know...**

That our Historical Society Research Room contains Miamisburg High School yearbooks dating back to 1913.

Stop by and spend a memorable hour or two by leafing through the old Mirus yearbooks. We have a great collection here for all to enjoy.

Our yearbook inventory is complete from 1913 through 1964, with the exception of 1918 when a Mirus was not produced.

From 1965 to the present, we are **in need** of the following yearbooks:

1965 • 1967 • 1968 • 1971 • 1973 • 1974 • 1980 • 1982

Also needed are all books from 1986 to the present.

If you would like to help complete our collection by contributing a Mirus, please call 859-5000 or stop by the Market Square Building on Wed. or Sat., 1:00-4:00.

### **August Program Set**

#### **Viewing of Magic Lantern Glass Negatives**

Join us on Thursday, August 24 for a viewing of the old Magic Lantern glass negatives which have been secured through the local library. The negatives are currently being scanned so they can be put into a DVD format for everyone to see.

We need your expertise! Many of these photos appear to be of local subjects and the audience will have an opportunity to help in identifying them.

General Meeting  
Market Square Building  
Thursday, August 24 7:00 pm

## Kercher Log Cabin Identified

(Continued from page 1)

Whereas the Historical Society strongly supports the development of the land as a new public park, we are very concerned as to what is to become of this historic structure. For the present, the City has agreed to refrain from demolishing this home, which will give the Historical Society time to document the condition of the logs and to develop possible reuses for this log structure. In any case, the building will have to be moved to another site since it sits squarely in the path of the new access road to the park.

By the time you read this, a group of volunteers will have stripped the plaster and lath from the inside of the cabin, which will give us a better feel for possible restoration of the structure. In the meantime, Dr. Carl Becker is working on documentation which should result in this structure being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation (if approved) will not protect the structure against demolition, but will be helpful in securing possible grants for moving and restoration work.

The Miamisburg Historical Society welcomes any ideas you might have for the eventual reuse of this historic structure and means to fund its restoration. Please call Phil Johnson at 866-1050 or Les Wead at 866-1604 with your thoughts on this matter.

## FIFTY-FOUR YEARS AGO September 11, 1952

A group of nine boys and girls, between the ages of 6 and 12 will do their part to aid in raising funds to help polio victims of Miamisburg this Saturday afternoon.

The group thought up the idea themselves and the idea is a homemade circus with all the trimmings. Young and old alike are invited to attend, beginning at 3:00 pm. The place is a shed at the rear of the Fred Loy property on the Dayton-Springboro Pike, just north of the stoplight on the Miamisburg-Centerville Pike. The Loy home is the first house on the left on Rt. 741, just past the intersection with Rt. 725.

Jim Wilcher, age 11, will be the master of ceremonies and promises to keep patrons in stitches with his natural humor. There will be a trapeze, which has been tested and found safe. Costumes will be used and some will be dressed as clowns while others will perform tap dancing routines. Soft drinks and popcorn will be sold and pony rides provided.

## In the Gift Shop

### Cat's Meow Inventory and Pricing:

Bell High School	\$15.00
Carnegie Library	13.00
English Manor B&B	15.00
Fire Station	13.00
Gebhart Tavern	11.00
Hamburger Wagon	9.00
Kinder School	13.00
Koffee Kup	13.00
Market Square Building	13.00
Miamisburg Mound	9.00
Parkview Methodist Church	15.00
Peerless Mill Inn	15.00
St. Jacob Lutheran Church	13.00
St. James Methodist Church	15.00
Trinity United Church of Christ	13.00
Wantz School Building	13.00
Wantz School Bell	6.00

*Due to reduced pricing, MHS member discounts will **not** be given on Cat's Meows.*

Don't forget our gift shop when looking for a meaningful gift. We have many books, photos, tapestries and other collectible items pertaining to the history of Miamisburg.

**NEW: "Steel Pots" DVD. The history of America's steel combat helmets**

**NEW: Historic Photos of our town**

Books and booklets include:

The Hill Grove Cemetery Book  
 "Miamisburg In WWII" by Carl Becker  
 "The Story of Our Town"  
 "When Tobacco Was King"  
 Dr. John Treon Book  
 "Memoir of 1913 Flood"  
     by Ida Pansing Eck  
 Aunt Harriet's Storybooks  
     by Harriet Hieronymus

The Miami Township Book and the Baum Opera House Cookbook are also available in the shop.

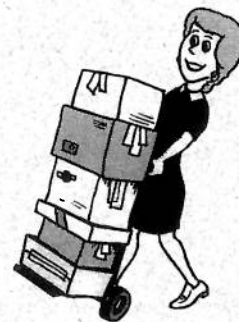
**Gift Shop hours are Wed. and Sat.,  
1:00 - 4:00 pm**



## Historic Research and Resource Committee – HRRC...

So far this year, we have received twenty-five donations to add to the many archived items in the Society's collection. Approximately twelve thousand entries have been added to the database with summer data entry adding even more.

We took the summer off because family and special events are *top priority*. It is only fair to allow these 'great' volunteers time to enjoy a reprieve from all the hard work they do throughout the year. Volunteers have been processing collections and doing data entry, but working at their own pace during their summer vacation. Since the temperatures have been in the 90's, sitting in front of the computer, with the AC on, still keeps our minds well exercised.



Some volunteers do not take time off because of the hours the research room is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:00 to 4:00. If you want to help relieve these dedicated few, please call the Miamisburg Historical Society at 859-5000 or Nita Petticrew at 866-1285. We will be back on the meetings schedule as of Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at 7:00 pm, for our first meeting of the fall season. We hope to go on a tour to someplace 'special' – to be planned for a time when those who are not retired can join in on the tour, possibly a Saturday or Sunday.

Tentative project for this fall is a Hill Grove Cemetery supplement to bring the records up to date from 2000 to 2006. This will require some 'leg' work for the HRRC volunteers. We are looking forward to keeping busy for the rest of this year.

If you are interested in being part of this 'busy, get things accomplished' committee, please join us. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the Market Square Building.

**Nita Petticrew**  
**HRRC Committee Chair**

## Upcoming Events

August	September
<b>Event: Historical Society General Meeting</b> <i>Viewing and Identification of Magic Lantern Glass Negatives</i> <b>Date:</b> Thursday, August 24 7:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Market Square Building	<b>Event: Starving Artist Show</b> <b>Date:</b> Sat. & Sun., September 9-10 <b>Place:</b> Library Park
<b>Event: Cruise The Burg #3</b> <b>Date:</b> Saturday, August 26 4:00-10:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Downtown Miamisburg	<b>Event: HRRC Meetings Resume</b> <b>Date:</b> Tuesday, September 12 7:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Market Square Building
<b>Event: Old Fashioned Top Throwing</b> <b>Date:</b> Saturday, August 26 5:00-8:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Downtown Miamisburg	<b>Event: Cruise the Burg #4</b> <b>Date:</b> Saturday, September 23 4:00-10:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Downtown Miamisburg
	<b>Event: Historical Society General Meeting</b> <i>"Let's Go Down to Rikes" (Tentative)</i> <b>Date:</b> Thursday, September 28 7:00 pm <b>Place:</b> Market Square Building



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

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT # 638  
DAYTON OH 45401

certified by



## GREAT JOB!

Thanks go out to our President, Phil Johnson, who organized the "Bicycles Through the Ages" exhibition at the Market Square Building in July. Phil worked tirelessly and was involved in many areas of the "Weekend on Wheels" event in our city.

Thanks also to Joe Steffen, our Curator. Through his efforts the Hatfield Buggyabout was able to be brought here from Massachusetts and displayed throughout the weekend. It was definitely the high point of our exhibit.

Let's not forget all our volunteers who "manned" the Market Square Building during the extended open hours. Many good people contributed their time and talents to make the exhibit a success.

**Our Historical Society can be proud of the active roll it plays in city events, as well as its preservation of the past.**

## Miller-Chamberlin Auditorium Available for Private Functions

The Miller-Chamberlin Auditorium, located on the second floor of the Market Square Building, is a beautiful space that our Historical Society is proud to have available for private functions. The room features restored 19th century carved woodwork and period lighting. An elevator is available for handicap accessibility.

If you are looking for that perfect space to host a special event, whether it be an organization or a private function, stop by or call (859-5000) to see what the Miller-Chamberlin Auditorium has to offer. Reduced rates are in effect for sustaining members of the Historical Society. No smoking or alcohol permitted on the premises.

