



The Tavern Log

A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society

October 2006

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MIAMISBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS & BOARD

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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

Sundays, May thru Sept., 2:00—5:00 pm

Website:

http://miamisburg.org/miamisburg_historical_society.htm

Webmaster: Jay Robinson

Historic Miamisburg

Memories of the Star City

By Bobbie Sweny



We will soon be celebrating our 100th video tape of Historic Miamisburg. Producer Bob Knierim has invited anyone who has worked on this committee to be a part of this special event. It will be taped on October 24th at 3:00 pm followed by a get together to reminisce about the success of this project and to share a buffet provided for the occasion. We hope to see many of you there.

In the meantime Lowell Suttman has been exceptionally busy taping some very special programs with former Miamisburg people. He caught barber (and choir director) John Sharrits on one of his visits from Florida to talk about the old barber shop and the people who visited it. He interviewed former resident and successful businessman Lee Eudon Holland about his book, "Boiled Peanuts and Buckeyes", a biography of his life. And one you sports enthusiasts will enjoy - a meeting with Dick Dickey, Norbert Myers and Jerry Wantz to talk about their glory days of football with their undefeated team.

Remember, our programs are shown regularly on Tuesday nights at 6:30 and Sunday afternoons at 2:30 - and if you watch Channel 10, you may see us at any time on any day since they frequently use our tapes for "fillers" when they have no program scheduled. We take that as a compliment!

Upcoming Programs

By Paul Schultz

October 26 is the date for our Annual Business Meeting and Canal Days Dinner. Dinner is at 6:30 pm with Business Meeting and Program to follow. Dinner Tickets are \$5.00 and may be purchased at the Market Square Building or from a member of the Board.

This year we return to St. James Methodist Church for a meal of ham and beans, cornbread and dessert. The main course will once again be prepared by Mary Goodwin and her great volunteer crew. Please note we need volunteers willing to prepare a dessert (pies, cakes, etc.). Members who would like to contribute a dessert, please call Paul Schultz at 847-8277.

Following the dinner President Phil Johnson will conduct the Annual Business Meeting and Election of Board Members. The Program for the evening will be a presentation on the "Canals of Ohio" presented by Mr. Allan Rettberg.

Continued on Page 8

Our Own Ghost Story

Recent visits to Miamisburg by Alex Gamber and Patrick Hughes, of cable channel DATV's "The Ghost Hunters" program have inspired the following ghostly tale. Lock all the doors and settle in for a frightful tour of old Miamisburg.

A Ghost Hunter's Tale October 2006



They were best of friends. They had been childhood playmates. They had been separated. They had been family. They had been separated again. Now destiny had set their lives on a path of renewed kinship. Yes, that is what they were - kinswomen. These old friends, however, were now afraid.

Going downtown had been fun. Visiting the old buildings was a treat not a trick, but tonight was different. Tonight they were afraid. It was a lark to follow the "Ghost Hunters" about town, but how fear had slipped into the tour, they were not sure. Going to 14 Ferry Street, the old Kercher cabin, simply reminded everyone of Jacob's strong possession for the town and his first home in Miamisburg. Jacob made his presence known, but was harmless.

Visiting the old Market Square Building with its feeling of military secrets and the letter "N" was not an alarming experience. Sensing the children play with their balls up and down the stairway was not scary.

The old Plaza Theater had always been a place of joy for the 'sisters'. The "Pit and the Pendulum" never bothered them and of course "Premature Burial" just reminded them to always have their bells. Neither could ever imagine being afraid in front of the screen or behind it. Even though high electricity, or was it high anxiety, permeated every layer of the structure, the experience of touring 33 South Main Street was not frightening.

Gebhart's Tavern gave a sense of organization and community planning, not the chaos that they had expected. Surely Valentine Gebhart and his son Daniel discussed the fears that they had about the Miami tribe up river, but that fear no longer affected the old log building.

The Library might have been the source of fear. The Carnegie Center was built on the site of the old graveyard. Spirits were a plenty in that area and they even posed for a few digital shots, but swirling white mists never caught the sisters off guard before.

Even the excursion to Hillgrove Cemetery was not unsettling in any way, but as the friends approached Main Street again, the fear intensified. It was a strong sense of someone or something being there. They listened hard as they passed the Greek's Restaurant. No sounds. The fear grew stronger. Could spirits or lost souls be following them from all the haunts they had visited? Would this be a "spirit stalking"?

The Richmond Hardware Store was vacant, but close at hand. Perhaps they could hide there. No, they would go on. Once they reached the old J.C. Penney building they would only be 5 feet from the car. Whatever was pursuing them would have to be quick to reach them before they could sound the car alarm and wake all the downtown residents. They stopped; it was before them. Here was the reason for their fear. Here was what had followed them and struck fear in their hearts. On a lonely abandoned downtown street they met the cause of their fear.

They started laughing. They laughed so hard that their sides began hurting. After a day of ghost hunting and imagination stretching, here was where the fear had emanated. It was the three street mimes, Ari, Seal and Tock. The three 'quiet stooges', as they were called, had been following the friends as they toured the local haunts. No one noticed them because they never spoke. They just mimed. If you saw them you might understand what they were up to just by observing their body language, but most of the time the average person simply ignored them. There was no ignoring them tonight. Tonight they were getting the biggest laugh of their whole street miming career.

After the sisters calmed down and quit laughing, they tossed a few coins to the mimes, got in their car and drove away into the night, no longer afraid. As the car reached the spotlight the sisters turned to wave goodbye to the mimes, but all they saw was a brief glimpse of face paint dissipating as fog into the night.

boo!



We're Searching...

We're looking for a photo of the Eck Band Award (late forties to early fifties) being presented to a member of the Miamisburg High School Band. If you know where this photo can be located, please contact Joe Steffen, Curator, at the Miamisburg Historical Society (859-5000).

The Story Behind the Story

In the August issue of *The Tavern Log*, a newspaper clipping from 1952 was featured in which nine children put on a circus at the Fred Loy property in order to benefit polio victims of Miamisburg. After reading that article, Lynn Chamberlin Miller, who participated in the circus, sent us the following note:

"I want to add to the August story, '*54 Years Ago*'.

As a ten year old, I put on my best dance costume with sequins and feathers and did a couple of tap dance numbers on a sheet of plywood in the barn at Loy's. Then I did a couple of trapeze numbers ending with my famous 'hanging by my heels, wearing my magic tap shoes', which I thought was so very daring!

I have always remembered the fun and joy and good feelings I had from that circus. It was nice to hear applause at that young age, and I also felt good in my heart about making money for polio!"

Lynn Chamberlin Miller, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

Recent Acquisitions

Because of the generosity of our Historical Society friends, we've recently acquired two photos to add to our displays.

Red and Myrt Ashcraft have donated a large, hand colored photo of Sylvia Fox as an infant, which was taken in 1897. The photo, still in its original frame, is hanging in the main lobby of the Market Square Building, near the front door. An additional note of interest - Sylvia Fox lived to the year 2000 and the age of 103 years.

The second photo is a 1917 picture of all the Miamisburg Elementary School children and was taken behind Kinder School. This donation, made by Bill and Nila Getter, is especially interesting and important as Kinder School celebrated its 100th Birthday this month.

Many thanks to the Ashcrafts and the Getters, as well as all our other contributors, for thinking of our Society as a home for your treasured items. Not only will they be preserved, but will also be enjoyed by many others.

Well Wishes and Prayers...

Go out to Nancy Johnson who has been in Kettering Hospital for continuing treatments.

Get Well, Nancy!

How high is your Miamisburg IQ?

The October Pop Quiz:

Where was Miamisburg's first cemetery located?

- A. At the NE corner of 5th St. & Mound Avenue
- B. At the NE corner of First St. & Central Avenue
- C. At the present location of Library Park

Answer on Page 4





Notes From The Curator

Following are excerpts from letters written during the Civil War by 19 year old William Schuler of Miamisburg to his father. On the outside of one of the envelopes was a note, "I may not have a chance to write again. Your son, William Schuler".

"On the morning of the 30th we moved out in the direction of Gettysburg, about 11 miles distant, but having marched about 3 miles beyond Emmetsburg, we came upon the advance of the enemy who were soon found to be moving in the direction of Baltimore. Here we kept low merely feeling the enemy, his force and position. The morning of July 1st gave our Cavalry possession of Gettysburg, but about two miles beyond they encountered the enemy's Cavalry in force. We having been informed of these facts at once took up the line of march for Gettysburg. When within 2 miles of the place, the enemy's Cavalry and Infantry were pushing our Cavalry."

The narrative continues two days later:

"The morning of the 3rd opened calm, but about 11 o'clock the artillery opened most terrible and kept up the most terrible artillery fire of the war for several hours. About 3 o'clock the enemy made a grand demonstration to take the bluffs near the Cemetery, advancing double quick out of the woods at a right should shift."

"Our artillery now was in good range of them and threw shot and shell grape and canister that mowed them down like grass, but on they came as if blind to the danger and sure destruction until within about 300 yards of our works when we opened our Infantry upon them and making one grand charge over our works scattered them to the four winds, either killing, wounding or capturing a complete Division of Longstreet's Corps, the Division Commander Gene Picket. Believe me they laid by thousands in line as they advanced."

"In this engagement we captured 21 stand of colors, this the 3rd days fight was the most disastrous to the enemy and made our victory complete. The morning of the 4th, Independence Day, opened with heavy skirmishing along the whole line, but before noon there were some doubts whether the enemy would make another attack and some believed that they were falling back and this proved to be true. Others believed that Lee was about to make a demonstration on our flanks."

"About 4 o'clock pm the artillery opened on the extreme left, but few shots were fired as the enemy did not reply. We secured a ration of whiskey. During the day it rained most all day and we being exposed to the storm, it was deemed necessary for our health. The morning of the 5th came and the enemy was no more, they were gone."

Joe Steffen, Curator

Pop Quiz Answer

The correct answer is B. On land donated by Jacob Kercher, the cemetery opened in 1815 where the Civic Center is now located. When the Miami-Erie Canal was built, it ran through this land and the remains were moved by individual families or by the city.

Related Note: There was a cemetery at the present location of Library Park, but it did not open until 1840.



Highlighting Our Historical Society

Did you know...

Previous editions of *The Miamisburg News* dating back to 1872 are on microfilm in our Research Room and available for viewing. What a great resource we have at our fingertips for researching local events, family history or just for some very interesting reading.

Not only are you able to view the old newspapers, but after finding your article(s) of interest, you may also print them. Great for you genealogy buffs in recording marriages, births, obituaries, etc., for your family records.

From 1872-1895 the paper, then known as *The Miamisburg Bulletin*, gives us a glimpse of life in the late nineteenth century. Our microfilm inventory of *The Miamisburg News* continues up until June, 1999 allowing us to research events that happened during our lifetime..

The following editions (years) are not included in our inventory: January 11, 1895 thru June 16, 1898 and the years of 1910 and 1911.

Our Market Square hours are Wed. and Sat. 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

Board Nominees for 2007-08

The terms of two positions on the Historical Society Board will expire at the end of this year. Cathy Oberer, as Board Secretary and Randy Staley, as Veterans Committee Chair, have again agreed to put forward their names as nominees for the upcoming 2007-08 two year term.

Elections for these board members will take place at the MHS Annual Meeting on October 26.

Gebhart Tavern Open Thru October

Due to the pleasant fall weather and the number of interested visitors, the Daniel Gebhart Tavern Museum will remain open through the month of October.

Many thanks to our MHS volunteers, serving as docents, for making this extra "open" month possible.

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Gary D. Smith

Fox Motors - Josh Fox

Thomas Schultz

Children's Programs

Our fall season got off to an early start with a request from Kinder School for a history lesson on the building of Kinder School followed by a historic walk and a tour of the Gebhart Tavern Museum for the two third grade classes. This was held on Monday, September 25th with fathers and mothers acting as volunteer chaperones. Bobbye Sweny gave a short history of Kinder School followed by stories of teaching at Kinder by Betty Morris. Rolla Broerman (a new volunteer to the children's programs) did the historic walk with us, along with her daughter, Vi, visiting from North Carolina.

On October 17th, 18th and 19th, we will be taking six classes of second graders from Medlar View on a similar trip organized by Cindy Kline. This will include over 120 children - about 44 to a tour. If you'd like to know what we cover on these tours, please attend the Canal Days Dinner and get your copy of the Annual Report that has a complete outline of our tour schedule. Or better yet, why don't you join us for one of these walks!!

Third grade teacher, Ginger Schwieterman, Kinder School, has asked for a 4-day program next spring. Since they have already taken the "Miami Erie Canal" tour, we will give them a tour of the Market Square Building and the downtown area.

We encourage you to join the Children's Programs Committee. We are getting more requests for fall programs as well as the spring programs. They are a lot of fun - I think you would enjoy it. And a reminder: This is not just women's work!!!

Bobbye Sweny
Children's Programs and Education

Heartfelt Prayers and Condolences

To the family and friends of Karl and Carol Zimmerman, who recently lost their daughter, Lisa, in a tragic accident.

Sincere Sympathy

To Jeanette Kruer Eshbaugh and the extended Eshbaugh/Kruer families on the death of Mark Eshbaugh who passed away on September 15.

In the Gift Shop

FEATURING:

"Boiled Peanuts and Buckeyes"
By Lee Eudon Holland

The latest addition to the historical offerings in our gift shop is the newly acquired memoir-novel by Miamisburg Class of 1951 graduate, Lee Eudon Holland.

Mr. Holland tells about his early years, living in six different cities by the time he was 15 years old. He describes many of his high school experiences here in Miamisburg, along with his memories of the undefeated 1950 Vikings football team.

Hardcover: \$27.00 Softcover: \$18.00



Books and booklets now available include:

The Hill Grove Cemetery Book
"Boiled Peanuts and Buckeyes"
by Lee Eudon Holland
"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

Upcoming Events

OCTOBER

Event: MHS Annual Meeting
Canal Days Dinner - Tickets \$5.00
Date: Thursday, October 26 - 6:30 pm
Place: St. James Methodist Church

Event: Sweet or Treat Night
Date: Saturday, October 28 6:00-8:00 pm
Place: Downtown Miamisburg

NOVEMBER

Event: Historical Society General Meeting
"Legacies of America's Military Vets"
Date: Thursday, November 16 - 7:00
Place: Market Square Building

Event: MMA Annual Turkey Trot
Date: Thanksgiving Morn., Nov. 23, 6:30 am
Place: Downtown Miamisburg

DECEMBER

Event: Christmas Parade & Santa Scramble
Date: Saturday, December 2 5:45-8:00 pm
Place: Downtown Miamisburg

Event: Holly & Ivy Gala
Date: Friday, December 8
Place: To be announced

Event: Christmas at the Tavern
Date: Sunday, December 10, 2:00-5:00 pm
Place: Gebhart Tavern,
 Corner of Lock & Old Main St.

Veteran's Committee Report

By Randy Staley

The Veterans Committee is already in the process of working on the 2007 Memorial Day Weekend program. We are badly in need of more volunteers to make it all come together again next year.

There are numerous opportunities to volunteer that will greatly help to lessen the load currently being carried by our small committee. These include areas of publicity, exhibit set up and tear down, dance decorations (set up and tear down), refreshments, parade marshals, parade committee and numerous other jobs that need to be done.

The weekend will begin again in 2007 with the "Silver Taps" ceremony being held at our General Meeting at the Market Square Building on Thursday, May 24. The remainder of the festivities will run throughout the weekend ending on Monday, May 28.

You don't have to be a veteran to join us! This is a community project. If you would like to be a part of the 2007 Memorial Day Weekend Planning Committee, please call Rolla Broerman, our Volunteer Coordinator at 866-2497.

**We are very happy to welcome Karen Sherrill
 as a new committee member.**



Painting by Christopher Newman

Kinder School Celebrates 100th Birthday

It was a pleasure and an honor to be at the 100th Birthday Celebration held outdoors behind Kinder School on October 1. The day was as sunny as the cheerful classrooms and the faces of teachers and visitors alike. Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed touring the old building and reliving those childhood memories that are somehow never forgotten.

Kinder School can be proud of its longevity and most importantly the rating of Excellence that it has attained. The warm and welcoming academic atmosphere that exists at Kinder School is very evident and certainly a model for all others. **Congratulations Kinder... Job Well Done!**



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Equipment Sale

The items listed below are currently stored in the "Little White House" behind Gebhart Tavern. In order to free up space for children's classes and as a workroom for special projects, the following items are available:

- Antique Washing Machine
- 2 Desk/Chairs from the old Miamisburg High
- 1 Desk and Chair
- Computer Desk and Chair
- Old Computer and Printer
- Electric Typewriter and Fonts
- 2 Drawer File Cabinet.

There is no charge for the items, however a donation to the Miamisburg Historical Society would be appreciated. All items are being sold "as is" and the buyers would be responsible for removing the items.

If you are interested, please call the Miamisburg Historical Society at 859-5000 for an appointment.

Upcoming Programs

(Continued from Page 1)

The November General Program will be held on November 16 at 7:00 pm in the Miller-Chamberlin Auditorium. (Please note: Change in date to Nov. 16 due to Thanksgiving Holiday.)

This year's program will honor and celebrate the "Legacies of America's Military Veterans". The presenter will be Tara Dixon-Engel, President and CEO of American Veterans Institute, Inc. Ms. Dixon-Engel is also co-author of the book, "Naked in Da Nang" and National Chairman of "Operation Welcome Home". Also presenting will be Lt. Co. Mike Jackson (Ret.), co-author and also subject of the book, "Naked in Da Nang".

All Miamisburg Historical Society members are encouraged to attend. A special invitation is extended to all military veterans and their families, especially Vietnam Veterans.