



# The Tavern Log

A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society

February 2016

Volume XXV Issue 1

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

### Submit material to:

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Miamisburg, OH 45343  
or via e-mail to  
dewarrick@sbcglobal.net

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

### THE MARKET SQUARE BUILDING

4 N. Main Street, Miamisburg, OH 45342  
Open Wed. & Sat., 1:00—4:00 pm

### THE HERITAGE VILLAGE

Gebhart Tavern and Kercher Pioneer Home  
Corner of Lock St. and Old Main, Mbsg.  
Sundays, May thru Oct., 2:00—5:00 pm

### BOARD MEETINGS

Held the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Market Square Building.

E-Mail Address: MHSociety@att.net  
Phone: (937) 859-5000



## Plaza Theater Opens on Christmas Day

Thanks to a committee headed by Doug Sorrell, and the contributions of many local businesses, organizations and citizens, the Plaza Theater on Main Street is once again open for business. Originally opened on Christmas day in 1919 and showing silent movies at that time, the Plaza was a popular attraction in Miamisburg for many years until it closed in the mid 1960's. The site then became a retail clothing and equine supply store called the Western Shop. It was owned and managed by the Sorrell family for 34 years, from 1968 to 2002.

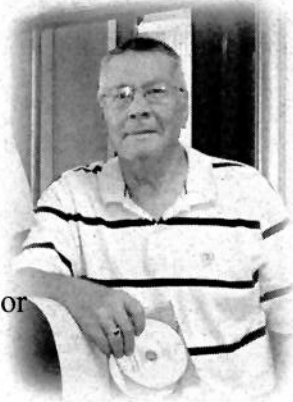
Although the Plaza still retains some of its original architectural features, it is now fitted out with 285 large, comfortable seats, modern digital projection equipment, eight speakers with sound system and a much larger screen. Of course there is a concession stand and, can you believe it, even Wi-Fi is available. The almost 100 year-old Plaza has definitely entered into the modern age, thanks to the efforts of many dedicated people.



The theater will be open Thursday through Sunday and movies will rotate regularly. Classic movies such as *Gone With the Wind*, *Casablanca*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and *Sleepless in Seattle* will be shown as well as child friendly matinees with movies such as *Polar Express*, *Annie*, *Shrek* and the *Muppet Movie*. Admission is \$5.00 per person. Doug Sorrell relates that the object is not to make a profit, but just to break even and give folks another reason to come to downtown Miamisburg. For additional information or to see what's playing at the Plaza, go to [www.plazatheatre.us](http://www.plazatheatre.us). *Note: The theater is also available for rental.*

Our sincere appreciation to Dayton Mailing Service who so generously donate their printing and mailing services for each issue of *The Tavern Log*.

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## Notes From The Curator

By Gary Petticrew, Curator

### Remember Mobley's on Fourth Street?

This photo of Mobley's Saloon and Restaurant was dropped off to the Miamisburg Historical Society by Chuck Orth in December. It brought back some glimpses of the past for me. Having attended high school on Linden Avenue in the 1950s, I can recollect cutting through Library Park to Mobley's for lunch for a shredded chicken sandwich or cheeseburger and a cherry-coke, or better yet my favorite, a Star City cream-soda ("red") pop.

And, if I think back correctly, all for a dollar or less; sometimes even a beef hot-shot when I had few extra coins in my pocket.

When we arrived at Mobley's we were swiftly ushered into the restaurant area through an open entry way to the left side in the Mobley photo. We were never allowed to hang out in the bar area.

I'm not sure when this photo was taken, but guess it was in the 1920s or 30s. The view is from the front entryway looking west. Mobley's was also just north of another favorite spot, Shy's Lunch on the NW corner of Central and Fourth Street.



Mobley's was a family-owned, neighborhood gathering place for many Miamisburg patrons. I have recollections of when I was really young and my Wead and Petticrew uncles, aunts and cousins would come to our house on Friday or Saturday evenings to play cards. We lived in the "country" then, on Gebhart Church Road. My mother, Ruth Wead Petticrew, would pop a dishpan full of popcorn and my dad, Guy, made the trip to Mobley's for a "bucket" (jug) of draft beer. They must have played late into the evening because I can remember being half asleep, picked up and carried to bed. And some of my cousins likewise were carried asleep to their parents' cars for the trip home.



That is all I can remember about Mobley's Saloon and Restaurant.

If you have stories and facts or photos about Mobley's, please share them by stopping by the Market Square Building on a Wednesday or Saturday afternoon (1:00-4:00 pm) or email them to me at [gaccesslp@woh.rr.com](mailto:gaccesslp@woh.rr.com).



## Statehood Day Scheduled in Columbus

The annual Statehood Day advocacy event will take place at the Ohio Statehouse on Tuesday, March 1. The Ohio History Connection and 12 other statewide history and preservation organizations each year sponsor Statehood Day to recognize Ohio's birthday (March 1, 1803) and to advocate for the issues important to Ohio's history and historic preservation organizations.

To learn more about the half-day program or to register, go to [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org) and click on the Statehood Day icon. By attending, you'll have the opportunity to get connected with history-related issues, meet with your local elected officials and celebrate the awarding of History Fund grants.

## We're Back in the Groove Again!

After a brief winter break, our regular monthly program schedule will resume on February 25. Society member, Jim Caldwell, will present his "Native American Culture" program. Afterward there will be plenty of FREE Ron's pizza for all. This meeting always brings in lots of folks and is a great way to begin our 2016 season. (Jim Caldwell, our presenter, is also deeply involved in the city's upcoming Bicentennial celebration in the summer of 2018, wherein our Native American history will be a big feature.)

Mark your calendars also for our monthly program on March 24. Billy Ring, who has been a presenter previously at Market Square, this time will bring his antique postcard collection and tell us all about it. As always, we hope you'll stick around after the program for refreshments.

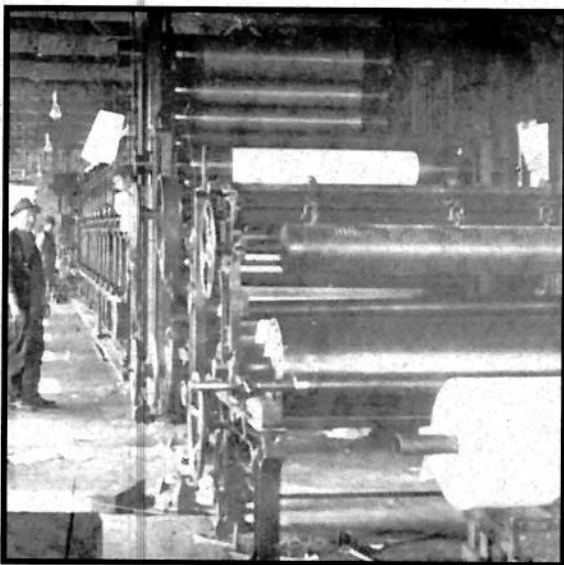
We're also planning a big garage/yard sale as a fundraiser, in either March or April this spring, so be sure and stay tuned for further information about that.

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Thurs., Feb. 25 at 7:00 pm  
"Native American Culture"  
Presented by Jim Caldwell  
at Market Square Building.  
FREE Ron's pizza for all.

Thurs., March 24 at 7:00 pm  
"Antique Postcard Collection"  
Presented by Billy Ring  
at Market Square Building.

Historical Society Yard Sale  
will be held in March or April.  
Date to be announced.



*Interior of Miamisburg Paper Co.*

## Ohio's "Paper Valley" Papermaking in the Miami Valley

By Carol O'Connell, Media Production Group

Ohio's papermaking started in 1807. Miamisburg was a perfect location for mills due to its access to the Great Miami River and the Miami Erie Canal. The canal provided the hydraulic system to power the mill and the canal boats to transport raw materials and products. Rags and wheat straw were the primary raw materials used for papermaking. Later, wood pulp was introduced; rags remain the best.

In a 1976 publication it was stated there were 305 operating paper mills in Ohio with 43% of the industry employment centered in the five southwestern Ohio counties of Butler, Hamilton, Miami, Montgomery and Warren. That is why the area became known as Ohio's Paper Valley.

Entrepreneurs such as Mead, Beckett, Maxwell, Friend and Newell are familiar to the Miami Valley paper industry. In Miamisburg it was Schultz, Manning, Hoover, Gamble and others launching the paper industry with the Miami Valley Paper Company aka Miamisburg Paper Co., Ohio Paper Co., Kimberly Clark/American Envelope/Karolton.

The papermaking industry has progressed from the simple hand making process to today's computer generated operations. Pulp from rags to wood to recyclables has led to an extraordinary supply of multi-purposes in various shapes, colors, sizes and coatings. The mills of the 1800s and 1900s have been lost due to mergers, acquisitions, floods, fires and decaying buildings. The names of these mills may be found in the history of five global companies: International Paper, Georgia Pacific, Wausau, American Packaging and WestRock.

The Miami Valley Communications Council, the government access channels of 5 or 99, taped a show on Ohio's Paper Valley hosted by me with guest, David Neuhardt of the Yellow Springs Historical Society, historian-extraordinaire of the Miami Erie Canal and legal counsel for several paper companies.

*Editor's note: Carol would like to hear from you with your memories of any of the mills. (937) 384-0761*



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## **Society Enters 1918 Willys Overland in Community Holiday Parade**

The 14th annual Community Holiday Parade was held on December 12th in downtown Miamisburg. This year's parade was by far the largest yet and the weather cooperated by being absolutely balmy for December. Our entry was the 1918 Willys Overland that was donated to the Society by Jim Lenz in 2014.

The theme of the parade was 'Cartoon Characters' and our riders in the old car were dressed as Alvin and the Chipmunks. Greg Wartinger, our chief mechanic and driver, was dressed for the occasion and Judy Wuerstl, Carolyn Kilpatrick and Deana Fahrney were the Chipmunks. The Overland was all gussied up and decorated for the holidays with wreaths and greenery and, with its bright yellow paint, made a beautiful entry.



*Judy Wuerstl, Carolyn Kilpatrick, Deana Fahrney and driver, Greg Wartinger pose for pictures before the parade.*