



# The Tavern Log

*A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society*

October 2015

Volume XXIV Issue 5

## MIAMISBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS & BOARD

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

### 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.

### 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, Msbg.  
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

Website: [www.miamisburghistory.org](http://www.miamisburghistory.org)  
Webmaster: Jay Robinson



## It's Ham and Bean Soup Time!

We call it our "Canal Days Dinner". It's a warm, fall  
supper of ham and bean soup, along with cornbread,  
coleslaw, and some of the best desserts you ever ate.  
You say bean soup is not your favorite? We'll offer  
vegetable soup just for you, as an alternative choice.

This event is our major fundraiser of the year, and proceeds are vital to  
the Historical Society operating fund, which allows our organization to  
continue to preserve, teach and share the history of Miamisburg. Once  
again this year, the dinner will be held at the Parkview United Methodist  
Church where there is plenty of space for all. Serving will begin at 5:00 pm.  
There will be no program, meeting or silent auction at the dinner this year,  
as we've decided it's all about the FOOD! Just come out and enjoy a  
nice dinner and be sure to bring a friend.

*Please support your Miamisburg Historical Society  
by attending our major fundraiser of the year.*

## Canal Days Ham and Bean Dinner

**Thursday, October 22**

**Serving begins at 5:00 pm**

**Tickets: \$8 per person**

Parkview United Methodist Church  
3713 Benner Road  
Miamisburg, OH 45342

Tickets are being mailed to local members, but additional tickets may  
be purchased at Market Square on Wednesdays and Saturdays from  
1:00 to 4:00 pm, or from board members, or you may pay at the door.

Our Annual Report booklet will be distributed to members that evening.  
It features lots of color photos and gives members a close-up look at what  
the Society has accomplished during the past fiscal year. The report  
also contains a financial report and a list of current members. These  
booklets are not mailed out, so if you don't pick one up at the dinner,  
copies will be available at the Market Square Building after October 22.

**Our Canal Days Dinner is open to the public, as are all our events,  
so invite your friends to come along, and enjoy!**

## Final High School Football Game To Be Played at Harmon Field On October 23

If you or your children attended school in Miamisburg, you surely have many memories of Harmon Field. It has been the venue for sports and band activities in Miamisburg since 1923, when the field was built. How many can remember the first permanent, wooden grandstands, pictured below, which were located on the south side of the field? In the 1950's much larger, modern grandstands were built on the north side of the field and the

old stands served the visiting team's fans for a very short period, before they were finally razed and replaced with new construction.

Did you realize that there are many Harmon Fields, other than our own? Two nearby are in West Carrollton and Greenville. In 1928 there were 117 sports fields in 34 states which were named after the philanthropist, William E. Harmon, who donated the land for these fields to the communities.

Mr. Harmon, a real estate developer who was born in Lebanon, Ohio, established a trust to provide smaller towns with the means of having their own sports fields, to benefit the children in those areas. To comply with the requirements of accepting the grant of land, the communities had to agree to the following:

- That the property be used in perpetuity for playground and recreational purposes.
- That no building be erected upon the property, except for the furtherance of desirable play and recreation.
- That the premises shall always be known as Harmon Field.
- That the land shall be open to all persons.
- That the premises shall always be kept in such condition as to be attractive as a place of recreation and shall not be permitted to become a nuisance in appearance or unattractive as a place for recreation.

Even though times have changed greatly since 1923 and a brand new sports complex has been built at the High School on Belvo Road, our Harmon Field will continue to serve the community in many ways. It will be used as a practice field, a venue for Jr. High and Pee Wee football games and a host of other uses.

Word is that on October 23 when the last football game is played, folks who have been involved in sports at the field, have been a cheerleader, or have played in the band are invited to attend this game. A special program is being planned for that night. So if you'd like to be part of saying so-long to Harmon Field as the Miamisburg High School Stadium, be there that evening.



*Photo courtesy of Ohio Historical Society*

At right is a photo of the plaque that is attached to the stone monument at Harmon field.



**HARMON FIELD**  
THIS PLAYFIELD WAS MADE OURS  
THROUGH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE  
**HARMON FOUNDATION**  
1923

DEDICATED FOREVER TO THE PLAYS,  
OF CHILDREN, THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
YOUTH AND THE RECREATION OF ALL  
"THE GIFT OF LAND IS THE GIFT ETERNAL"

*Photo by Randy Staley*

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Katie Lenski  
 Keith Thompson  
 Elizabeth Kreitzer  
 Phyllis Githens  
 Wayne & Alicia Kern

**NEW CORPORATE SPONSOR**

**B&B Riverfront Hall**

*Thank You Members!*

**Membership & Corporate Sponsor Renewals  
 During August and September:**

Peg Rinaldi                      Sandra Brest  
 Patricia Barnes                Paul Mason  
 Bobbye Sweny                Dee Stalder  
 Carole Troup                 Alice Takase

Jim Bornhorst

William & Patricia Johanan

Richard & Joyce Petticrew

American Legion Post 165 (Corporate)

*Congratulations!*

To Dean and Mary Goodwin  
 who celebrated their

**78th**

**ANNIVERSARY**

on September 7.

**Membership Application**

I would like membership in the category checked:

☐ Student Membership                      \$5.00  
☐ Individual Membership                      \$15.00  
☐ Family Membership                      \$25.00  
☐ Sponsor Membership                      \$50.00  
☐ Corporate Sponsor\*                      \$50.00  
☐ Patron Membership                      \$100.00  
☐ Lifetime Membership                      \$500.00  
☐ Society Friends                     

Donation

Total enclosed \$

\* Corporate Sponsors will be given a small size ad  
 in the bi-monthly newsletter, *The Tavern Log*.

Method of Payment:

☐ Check                      ☐ Cash

NOTE: We are no longer accepting credit cards.

Please make check payable to Miamisburg Historical Society.

☐ New member                      ☐ Renewing member

Name

Address

City

State  Zip

Phone

E-mail

Would you enjoy volunteering?  
 Please note your areas of interest:

Please mail to: Miamisburg Historical Society  
 PO Box 774  
 Miamisburg, OH 45343-0774



## Antique Display Cases Donated By Paff Jewelers

The Society is very pleased to be the recipient of several early 1900's wood and glass display cabinets that were donated by the Paff Family. The family owned business, which was formed in 1929 by John Paff, will be closing later this year. After occupying several locations on Main Street, the business eventually moved to their present spot in 1960. Obviously, they have been a fixture on Main Street for three or four generations, and it won't be the same without Paff Jewelers.



The photo at left shows just one of the cabinets with metal racks that would hold large rolls of paper for wrapping articles. Professional movers were used on August 26 to transfer the cabinets and cases. One of the cabinets was moved to the Gebhart Tavern Museum, where it will be a great addition and enable us to display many more artifacts. The remainder of the cases were put into storage at an environmentally controlled building at the Mound Business Park. They will remain there, preserved and protected, until

the Society is able to acquire a much larger museum space. At that time, they will be greatly needed and a perfect means of displaying our ever increasing number of historical items.

All our thanks to Gene and Pat Paff and their son, Gene, Jr., for donating these valuable cabinets. Not only will they be put to great use, but will be preserved for future generations to enjoy. Pat Paff has been working on a history of the business and we hope to be able to share some of her information in a future newsletter. It's folks like these who add so much to the Miamisburg Historical Society, by their very generous donation.

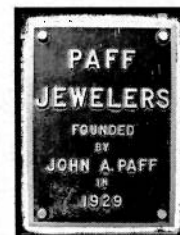
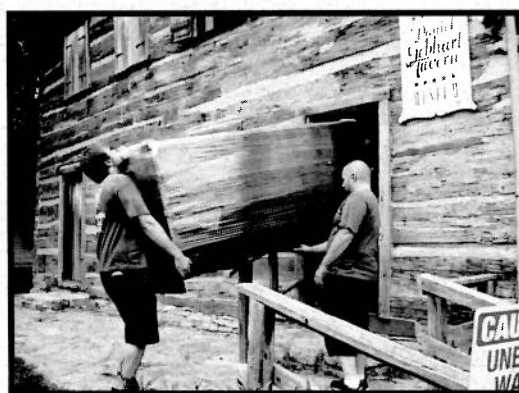


Retiring owners,  
Pat and Gene Paff on cabinet moving day.

Gene, Jr. and Gene Paff



*"Two Men and a Truck" movers (actually 5 men) did a masterful job of moving the old cabinets without a scratch or glass breakage on any of them, and it was no small feat!*



*Moving the display case into the Gebhart Tavern Museum.*



## 2015 Veteran's Day Observance - Wed., November 11, 11:00 am

By Randy Staley, Veteran's Committee Chair

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend the service at **Library Park** by American Legion Post 165. This was the month, day, and time in 1918 when an armistice between Germany and the allied nations came in effect ending WWI. On November 19, 1919 Armistice Day was commemorated for the first time by a proclamation of President Wilson. Over the years Congress added to the meaning of the day to include other wars; changed the name, the date, and made it a uniform holiday, which created some confusion about the event. In 1975 President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94-97 which stated Veteran's Day would again be observed on November 11 from 1978 onward. Our American Legion has always commemorated Veteran's Day on Nov. 11 at 11:00am since its founding.

Immediately following the Memorial Service a rededication ceremony of the existing Vietnam Memorial, located on the north side of the park, will be held. The names of Tom Austin and Reggie Vance will be added to the honor roll of 10 others area residents killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Miamisburg Historical Society Presents

## Old Time Craft Day

Sunday,  
October 18  
2:00 to 5:00 pm

FREE ADMISSION!



At Miamisburg's Heritage Village

(Kercher Pioneer Home and Gebhart Tavern)  
Corner of Lock St. and Old Main • Miamisburg, Ohio

Watch the old time crafters  
as they demonstrate their skills...

Carving   Knitting   Tatting   Quilting  
Chair Caning   Spinning   Basket Making  
Dulcimer Playing   Blacksmithing   Furniture Making  
Creativity with dried herbs

FREE REFRESHMENTS!



## Come Out To Old Time Craft Day!

If you've never been to this annual event, be sure to attend this year. It's always a hit with young and old, as crafters of all types demonstrate the skills needed to survive in the 1800's. Our Heritage Village provides the perfect venue.

Tour the old cabins and find some crafters working away inside, and many more outside on the grounds of Heritage Village.

You'll see homemaking skills such as weaving, basket making and quilting, along with the heavier skills of blacksmithing and furniture making.

It's guaranteed your kids or grandkids will always remember helping the blacksmith hammer the metal into the shape of a nail, which he or she will be able to take home as a souvenir.



## Election of Officers and Board Held at Annual Meeting

It was a very small gathering at our Annual Meeting in September, but an interesting one where Committee Chairs detailed the activities in their areas of "expertise". The election of Board and Officers for 2016 was held with results as follows:

### OFFICERS

Eric Cluston, President  
Tim Fox, Vice President  
Carolyn Kilpatrick, Treas.  
Patty Peffly Barnes, Sec.  
Gary Petticrew, Curator

### BOARD

Dick Church   Randy Staley  
Kim Izor   John Warrington  
Paul Schultz   Judy Wuerstl

A beautiful array of cookies and dessert treats were served after the meeting, and we all did our best to consume enough to make up for the sparse crowd that evening - all in a valiant effort to avoid wastefulness, of course.

# Heritage Village News



By Judy Wuerstl, Heritage Village Coordinator

Another season at the Village is nearly over. Thanks to the commitment of our Village docents, so far only one Sunday remained closed due to lack of volunteers.

Plans for our annual Old Time Craft Day are coming together. This year the event will be held on Sunday, October 18, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Most of our great craftspeople are all coming back again, along with a new, interesting craft. Our Native American story teller will be with us, too. Mark your calendar and come visit us on that date!

Many thanks to the volunteers who worked at the Village in August and September:

Sharon Maddox  
Jane McGriff  
Mike Kindle  
Jessi Trofi  
Jay Robinson  
Doug Stamm

Vicki Warrick  
Kim & Mary Izor  
Cathy Oberer  
Annie Gikison  
Sherry Kahler  
Paul Schultz

Gary Petticrew  
Harley Schram  
Tom Silberman  
Murielene Case  
Jeanette Belvo  
Judy Wuerstl

Carolyn Kilpatrick  
Marilyn Shade  
Sharon Hiatt Yee  
Iola Hale  
Larry Suttman

And we welcomed a new "junior docent", ninth grader Tony Foster.

## THANK YOU CORPORATE SPONSORS ♦ YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS APPRECIATED!

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Miamisburg, OH 45342  
(937) 866-2101





## Limited Number of New Copies Now Available

"Miamisburg - The Story Of Our Town" has been out of print and unavailable for some time now. The book is a collection of essays, originally written by Mrs. Ester Light, and published by the Lions Club in 1968 in observance of the City's Sesquicentennial that year. In 1993 (the 175th Anniversary of our town), Mady Ransdell added to the book and her section, "Adapting to Change", encompassed the years 1968 to 1993.

Due to many requests and with our upcoming Bicentennial in 2018, the Historical Society thought it appropriate that additional copies be printed and made available. Our Gift Shop Manager, Rolla Broerman, took on the project and we now have more copies of this historical record of Miamisburg, beginning with the early settlers, available at our Market Square gift shop; price is \$30.

*Don't forget our gift shop for all kinds  
of Miamisburg memorabilia!*

With holidays coming up, did you ever consider giving the gift of a Society membership to a friend or family member?

**Market Square Building • 4 N. Main Street • Miamisburg**  
**Open Wed. and Sat. 1:00-4:00 pm**

Please note: Due to the prohibitive cost, the Society no longer accepts credit cards. Checks and cash are always accepted.

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

**Dayton Mailing Service  
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(937) 903-8517

**American Legion Post 165**  
35 N. Main Street  
Miamisburg, OH 45342  
(937) 866-5493

**Alcor Supply**  
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Miamisburg, OH 45342  
(937) 866-6194  
Fax (937) 859-3047

**Miamisburg / W.C. NEWS**  
230 S. Second Street  
Miamisburg, OH 45342  
(937) 866-3331

## It's The BOO Season!

Each year, around this time, tales of ghostly spirits abound. There are many such stories being told right here in Miamisburg. Are you a skeptic... or a believer?



### REAL LIVE GHOST.

#### **A Graveyard Apparition that is Scaring a Western Town.**

A thousand people surround the graveyard in Miamisburg, a town near Dayton, O., every night to witness the antics of what appears to be a genuine ghost. There is no doubt about the existence of the apparition, as Mayor Marshall, the revenue collector and prominent citizens testify to having seen it. Last night several hundred people, armed with clubs and guns, assaulted the spectre, which appeared to be a woman in white. Clubs, bullets and shot tore the air in which the mystic figure floated without disconcerting it in the least.

as they sounded the horn and drew near. It was a foggy night and very eerie, especially after having heard similar stories from other train crews. As recently as 2009, sightings of an apparition have been reported along the bike path, which passes under the railroad bridge.

You may read many more "haunting" tales, including those about our own Hill Grove Cemetery, in a book that's available in our gift shop entitled, "Haunted Miami Valley".

### Library Park

A haunting in our park was recorded in the Frederick, Maryland, *Daily News* of March 27, 1884. At left is a portion of the article. The headline read: "REAL LIVE GHOST - A Graveyard Apparition that is Scaring a Western Town."

An apparition of a female murder victim appeared there on many consecutive nights. In the 1880's the plot of land, we now call Library Park, was the town cemetery. The caskets/remains were later moved to Hill Grove Cemetery in the late 1880's. The ghostly specter has been seen in the Park as recently as the 1980's and may still appear today.

### The Railroad Bridge (crossing the Miami River near Rice Field, south of town)

A conductor on the Norfolk Southern reports there have been sightings by train crews around that area for years. One night he saw the form of a person walking on the tracks on the eastern side of the bridge. The train was approaching on the west side and the object disappeared



## Society Participates in Artisan Festival

We were able to introduce our Miamisburg Historical Society to the folks who came to the Artisan Festival at Riverfront Park on September 12. In addition to the gift items and information at the booth, Jim and Pat Caldwell were also on hand to spin tales of American Indian lore. We talked to lots of visitors and gained some new members too. We call that a success!

The weather was on the cool and cloudy side, but rain held off until late afternoon, when it hit with a vengeance, along with strong winds which sent everyone and everything scattering. We were able to rescue our "for sale" items and also our tents, although some were taken to the Wuerstl and Stamm homes for drying out.



Carolyn Kilpatrick, Patti & Bill Johanan work at the booth while visitors stop by.

Jim and Pat Caldwell tell folks about the Native Americans.

Thank you to all the volunteers who were involved with the booth. Try it sometime... It's FUN!

Judy Wuerstl, Chair Carol O'Connell Rolla Broerman Patti & Bill Johanan Carolyn Kilpatrick Ed Hiehle  
Loretta Colaricci Diane Warrick Judy Knight Gary Petticrew Jim Bornhorst Doug Stamm



## THANK YOU CORPORATE SPONSORS ♦ YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS APPRECIATED!

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Historical Society as a  
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here next issue!

**NEW!**

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17 S. Main Street  
Miamisburg, OH 45342  
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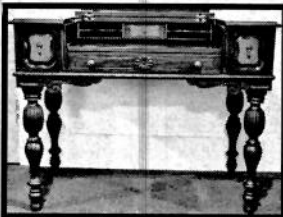
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(937) 859-1955

## Many New Acquisitions at Market Square

By Gary Petticrew, Curator

In addition to the Paff donation of display cases and other articles, the Society has also been the recent recipient of other important and interesting artifacts from several, different local citizens.



Janet Leis Reed has loaned the Society a beautiful women's desk, made by the Mutual Furniture Manufacturing Company here in Miamisburg. It is now on display at the Market Square Building. Janet's two sisters, Velma Leis Gephart and Alma Leis King and husband Lee, a long time insurance agent in Miamisburg, worked at the company during the 1930s and 40s. In fact, according to Janet, Lee was a lathe operator and may have actually turned the spindle legs for the desk.

Martha "Millie" Haney of Miami Township, gifted the entire collection from her husband, Edward Haney's die cutting career in the mid-1900s. The collection includes hundreds of advertising emblems and a golf divot tool he crafted for the first Official World Golf Ranking in 1986 at St. Andrew's Course in Scotland. It also includes most of his tools and his engraving machine, plus one of his many wood carvings titled, "The Torn Hat", which is on display at Market Square.

Gary Jestice, past Hamburger Wagon owner, gifted a large, cigar store, wooden Indian statue. Gary purchased it from an individual who related that it was carved by an Italian carver-artist from a single log and was used by a tobacco co-op in Essex County, New Jersey, along the Hudson River. It is a grand, giant statue, 9-feet tall, at least 3 feet wide and weighing in at around 600 pounds. Now at Market Square, it is a fantastic centerpiece to highlight Miamisburg's huge tobacco industry during the early years.



The newest addition to our transportation vehicles is a 1910 Enterprise "Courting" Buggy made here in the Burg, thanks to the efforts of Randy Staley and Wayne Burgett. Randy travelled to an Indiana estate sale along with John Mahan to bid on it, and won. John Mahan stored it in his barn until recently when Randy and Wayne moved it to our recently acquired storage facility at the Mound Development Center.





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

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*What's coming up in December...*

## **HOLLY & IVY GALA**

Friday Evening, December 4

A festive holiday gathering for members and friends.

(Watch your mail for more information.)

## **CHRISTMAS AT THE TAVERN OPEN HOUSE**

Sunday, December 6, 2:00-5:00pm

at the Gebhart Tavern Museum

corner of Old Main and Lock St. in Miamisburg.

We celebrate the season in 1800's style with  
free food, hot spiced cider, music and fun!



## **Our Winter Calendar**

The Society does not plan a November program due to Thanksgiving, but we swing back into action in December. Make a note on your calendar and join the Society's seasonal celebrations with our two December events. Remember also, the Community Holiday Parade at 11:30 am on Dec. 12 in downtown Miamisburg.

There will be no General Program in January. Regular Society programs will begin again on February 25, 2016 at the Market Square Building.

Take advantage of the many fun and interesting events that your Historical Society offers.