



# The Tavern Log

A Publication of the Miamisburg Historical Society

October 2010

Volume XIX Issue 5

## MIAMISBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS & BOARD

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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  
Sundays, 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

## Historical Society Wins State Awards

We're tooting our own horn and announcing with pride that our Society has won two 2010 Outstanding Achievement Awards from the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums (OAHSM).



Our **Childrens' Education Program** has won the History Outreach Award for Public Programming. We all know our Childrens' Program is exceptional, but it's a great honor to be recognized at the state level for our efforts. Bobbye Sweny was instrumental in starting and chairing the program since its inception in 2002. In June, Bobbye retired from that position and succeeding her is Judy Wuerstl who has been very much involved in the program for the past several years. Our thanks to the many volunteers who have taken part in our Childrens' Education Program over the years and have made it so successful.

The 2010 History Outreach Award for Media and Publications was given by OAHSM to our Society for "**The Tavern Log**" newsletter. Diane Warrick, *Tavern Log* Editor, has served in that position since 2006. Diane succeeded Chuck Sweny who brought *The Tavern Log* up to a much higher standard than in the years previous and who still oversees the printing and mailing. During the past five years, with the valuable contribution of articles and information by our members, our newsletter continues to evolve and serves as an informative, entertaining and professional means of communicating with Society members and the community. We are proud of *The Tavern Log* newsletter and are very pleased to have won this award.

On October 2, Bobbye Sweny, Judy Wuerstl and Diane Warrick traveled to Columbus to attend the OAHSM Awards Luncheon and to accept the awards on behalf of the Society. The awards will be on display at the Market Square Building. Congratulations to all involved who have contributed their time and talents, thus resulting in the winning of these 2010 Outstanding Achievement Awards.



## From the President's Desk...

By Ted Fink

As I have mentioned on a number of occasions, I am amazed at the talent and dedication of many of those who are members of the Miamisburg Historical Society. As detailed on page 1, Bobbye Sweny, Judy Wuerstl, and Diane Warrick will be accepting the Outstanding Achievement Award for "The Tavern Log" and the Childrens' Education Program on October 2. "The Tavern Log" and the Childrens' Education Program are just two examples of the many great things taking place within our organization. Congratulations to Bobbye, Judy and Diane, and thanks for all you do for the Historical Society.

You will notice in this edition of the "Tavern Log", there is an article by Steve Kuhn, the President of the Baum Opera House Executive Board. Steve and I have met on a number of occasions, and we are trying to work more cooperatively, and promote the common interest of each of our organizations. As you know, the Baum Opera House needs a lot of community support. We hope, through this cooperative effort, to make more people aware of what is going on with the Baum and how we may be able to help support the activities of that organization.

On Thursday, September 9, the Miamisburg Merchants' Association held one of their "Business After Hours" programs at the Gebhart Tavern/Kercher Cabin complex. Besides the many local business leaders, there were a number of city officials present, including Mayor Dick Church. It gave us the opportunity to showcase this complex and explain to the members of the MMA about the work of the Historical Society. We let them know that we are an all volunteer organization and our financial support comes from our members, a number of fund raising activities that we put on throughout the year and the benevolence of some local benefactors. We hope that they, as local leaders in our community, become more involved in the work of the Historical Society. Additionally we will be encouraging Corporate Memberships in the upcoming year, which they seemed to enthusiastically support.

As the summer of 2010 is in our rear view mirror and we gear up for the Society's Fall and Winter Programs, be sure to put the Canal Days Dinner on your calendar. Tickets should soon be in the mail. I hope to see you there.

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## Society Selling "Community Days" Coupon Books

By Barbara Olekas, Ways and Means Chairperson

Our new Ways and Means project is selling the "Community Days" coupon booklet to be used at Elder Beerman on November 13. The cost of the booklet is \$5 and ALL proceeds go to the Society. Inside the booklet is a coupon for \$10 off of a \$10 or more sale. Also there is a 30% off coupon and many 20% off coupons. There is also a pre-sale date starting on October 31. This means that if you are not available on November 13th, you may pre-buy and pick up your purchase later. There are also online sales and many other bargains that only this booklet will offer – 60% off Alfred Dunner and Breckenridge, \$30 off Columbia outerwear and other offers also.

I would like for each member to sell booklets, maybe 5. Please call me and I will see that you receive your booklets. I do need all unsold booklets to turn back into the store. I have 300 for sale, but more are available. Be a hit with your friends and family and give a few booklets as gifts!

Elder-Beerman is being very generous to non-profit organizations with this community project. The profits from our sales will enable us to keep up with the many projects that the Society sponsors, in addition to Market Square operations. Please call me to get booklets to sell. With your help this can be a very successful campaign.

Thank you for supporting this project. Barbara Olekas, Ways and Means Chair 937-855-6590

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## Dinner at Gebhart Tavern a Fun Evening For All

By Mary Pat Golden, Gebhart Tavern Dinner Chairperson

On August 21, Daniel and Mary "Polly" Gebhart hosted 26 guests in their 1811 Tavern. The guests gathered on the lawn outside the Tavern for a glass of non-alcoholic beer or wine and cheese and crackers. Then inside the Tavern, they were seated on benches at long tables and treated to a homemade dinner of vegetable soup, bread, chicken pot pie, applesauce, summer tomatoes, bean salad, corn fritters with maple syrup and dessert of blueberry cobbler with whipped cream. Daniel and Polly shared some stories of old Miamisburg and the evening ended with the "Foggy Noggin Boys" providing musical entertainment, including some songs from the 1800's and guest participation.



*Guests enjoy family style dinner.*



*Volunteers: Mary Pat Golden, Marilyn Shade and Clyde Golden*

The evening received great community support, presented by the Miller Family Fund with additional support from Oregon Printing, Inc. (Dayton) and Church's Flower Shop, Bill and Sharon Phillips, owners. Donations were also received from Kroger (Miamisburg), Cub Foods (Miamisburg) and from the Miamisburg Farmers Market vendors: Nash Farm, Porky's Farm, Garber Farm, Downing's Spring Valley Farm and Downing Fruit Farm.

25 dedicated, hard working volunteers made the evening a success. Hundreds and hundreds of hours were spent in research, planning, cooking, setting up, serving, washing dishes and cleaning up. The team did a wonderful job on Saturday working in the heat and occasional rain showers.

Our volunteers were: Jackie & Lynn Avery, Jeanette Belvo, Tammy Cain, Clyde & Mary Pat Golden, Kim, Mary & Karen Izor, Shawn Miller, Carol O'Connell, Barb Olekas, Jim & Karen Schnapp, Marilyn & Mike Shade, Doug Stamm, Bobbye Sweny, Diane Warrick, Don & Judy Wuerstl, Joe Olekas and Charlie Brewster of Foggy Noggin Boys, Miamisburg High School students, Ryan Padovani (National Honor Society) and Devin Lowell (Our Lady of Good Hope Youth Group).

The evening can be summed up with comments from some of the guests.

"This was an absolutely wonderful evening. The ambience was great. Loved eating in the Tavern. The food was delicious. I loved it." Sherry Barrett

"Fantastic Evening. Really felt like I was back in the good ol' days. Great food and lots of fun." Sharon Phillips



### How high is your Miamisburg IQ?

#### *The October Pop Quiz:*

**In addition to the Mound, the Adena Indians also built an earthworks enclosure resembling a levee that completely encircled what is now our downtown area.**

**Is this tale Fact or Fiction?**

*Answer on Page 4*



## HRRC... Historic Research and Resource Committee

By Nita Petticrew, HRRC Chairperson



The Annual October event, "**Ghost Steps**", will be held on **Sunday, October 17, 2010 at 7:00 pm**. This event is open to everyone. The 'walk' will be down South Second Street, between Central Avenue and Linden Avenue. We will meet at the Market Square Building at 7:00 pm and commence from there on a 'walk' back into the history of Miamisburg. The tour guide will give a brief history of the buildings and answer questions from the attendees.

We will then proceed to the Baum Opera House for a 'behind the scenes' tour. The Baum Opera House will also welcome the group to the Robert Templar Room. This year refreshments will be at the Baum Opera House. You may want to bring a flashlight and an umbrella. We look forward to having you join in this annual event.

## Old Time Craft Day Sunday, October 24 ♦ 2:00 - 5:00 pm

Heritage Village  
Corner of Lock St. and Old Main

FREE ADMISSION      REFRESHMENTS

## Sending our Sympathy

The Society sends deepest sympathy to Virginia Kinderdine and the entire family on the loss of her great-grandson, Nathan Kinderdine (age 7), who passed away on August 4.

Nathan was the son of Todd and Tracy Kinderdine and the grandson of Jack and Sue Kinderdine. Our condolences to all on your great loss.

### Pop Quiz Answer It's a FACT!

Hundreds of years before the white man settled in this area, the mysterious race of Adena Indians built an earthen enclosure that completely encircled their village. It ranged in height from 3 to 10 feet and was up to 50 feet wide at the base. This site now comprises our downtown area.

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

Please make check payable to:  
Miamisburg Historical Society

☐ I am a new member

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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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



## Hill Grove Civil War Soldiers' Stones Project

By Randy Staley, Veterans' Committee Chair

On Saturday, July 11, a work party organized by Life Scout Mitchell Hopper, Troop 425 of Centerville, began searching for broken head stones of 15 Civil War Veterans in an area known as the Soldiers Lot at Hill Grove Union Cemetery. Over the years the broken stones were overgrown with sod. With the assistance of Cemetery Superintendent Wade Collins, the four lots were measured and lined out. The entire area was probed and potential digs were flagged. In all, 15 stones were excavated, cleaned, catalogued and placed on gravel beds where they were found.

Eleven veteran's stones were found in line along the east side of lots 833 and 862. All were broken and in need of replacement. Four civilian stones were also found in the same area. The work party of at least 20 scouts, families and friends spent about four hours of hard work to complete the job. I would like to thank Terry Easton of Springboro History for his assistance and expertise in cemetery preservation. Hopefully there will be another project in the adjacent Miamisburg Corporation Lots where civilian remains were moved from Library Park and the Canal Cemeteries around 1863.

## History of Chautauqua Featured at September General Program

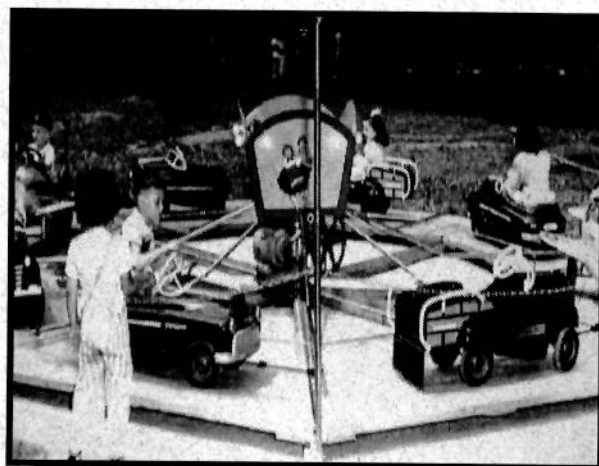
We revisited the past as Jerry Harmeyer of the Chautauqua Community Center presented a great program for our September General Meeting. He provided a slide show of photos dating from 1901 to the present. He spoke of the days when a walkway spanned the Miami River and provided an easy entrance to the park from the traction line which was on the east side of the river.



*Jerry Harmeyer*

The park originally served as a place for religious gatherings, but later evolved into more of an amusement park setting. We all enjoyed seeing the old photos of boaters on the river, the skating rink, the kiddie rides, the swimming pool and the old buildings. Because of arson, many of the original buildings are now gone.

Mr. Harmeyer currently runs a youth camp at Chautauqua. The last portion of his presentation showed Chautauqua as it is today. The old pool has been renovated and is still very much in use. Many new buildings have been built and during the summer, housing is available for 600 children and counselors. The camp is Christian oriented and provides a fun and safe place for children of all ages to enjoy. It's great to see that Chautauqua is still alive and serving a very useful purpose. Our thanks to Mr. Harmeyer for his great presentation.



*Kiddie Land Car Ride at Chautauqua  
Photo taken in the 1950's*



## Searching For Clues

We'd love to have more information about Daniel Gebhart, the proprietor of our Gebhart Tavern during the early 1800's. **What we know:** He was born on July 12, 1791 in Berks County, Pennsylvania. Daniel was the youngest of six children born to Valentine Gebhart and Anna Catharina Haag Gebhart. The family eventually migrated to the area that would become Miamisburg.

In 1810 Valentine Gebhart died. This left Daniel, at the age of 19, with the responsibility of the care of his mother and a need to earn a living. In 1811, permits needed to operate a tavern were obtained (in his mother's name, as he was not yet of age). At the same time a marriage license was taken out for Daniel and Mary "Polly" Eagle. The couple was married on July 25, 1811.

Daniel operated the tavern with his wife, Polly, until sometime in the mid 1830's. It is thought that the couple moved from Miamisburg to Indiana and from there to Pentwater, Michigan.

**What we don't know:** Did Daniel and Polly have any children. Are there descendents in this area or elsewhere? If you have any knowledge or family documentation regarding this couple (Gebhart or Eagle) that could tell us more about their lives, please call the Society at 859-5900 and leave a message for Les Wead.

## Annual Meeting and Canal Days Dinner

**Thursday, October 28, 5:00 to 8:00 pm**

St. James United Methodist Church  
401 Carlwood Drive  
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342

Dinner \$7.00

Coming up at the end of October is our Annual Meeting and Canal Days Dinner. There will be a very short business meeting in order to elect Board Members and Officers who will replace those whose terms are expiring the end of this year.

Don McLaughlin is arranging a display of photos that have been taken at our many events during the past year. This is a great time to find out what all the Society has accomplished since last October.

Please support your Society by purchasing two tickets to our traditional dinner which includes a great meal of ham, beans, cornbread and slaw, not to mention some wonderful desserts. Tickets will be mailed to members, but more may be obtained at the Market Square Building on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Tickets will also be available at the door that night. The public is welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Questions?

Call the Market Square Building at 859-5000.

## We Appreciate Our Corporate Sponsor Members!

**Fox Motors**  
**9 South Second Street**  
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**Nestor Insurance Agency**  
**8 Mound Avenue**  
**Miamisburg, OH 45342**  
**(937) 866-1278**





*Judy Wuerstl leads children through smokehouse.*

## Childrens' Educational Programs

By Judy Wuerstl, Childrens' Education Chairperson

The realization that I am following in the footsteps of Bobby Sweny has begun to sink in. Also now sinking in is that there is a **desperate** need to increase the number of volunteers. We are already receiving requests for the in-school programs and the walking tours for this year from our elementary schools. As teachers hear from other teachers about the programs we have done for their schools, the number of requests increases.

I'm sure you know how important our Childrens' Programs are to our Historical Society, not only because they instill in our young people a love for the story of our city and the people who founded it, but because **education** is an integral part of the Society's purpose and commitment.

***Am I asking for volunteers? Absolutely!***

Are you a born story teller? We can use your help... and we **provide** you with all the historical information. You can embellish with your own personal stories if you'd like. Do you like to dress up and pretend? You would find us a great place to play "dress up". I love to portray "Singing River", the Indian maiden who tells about the Adena and Miami Indians. Jim Schnapp is "Ole Jim", a wonderful frontiersman with his "possibles" bag that holds so many fascinating items. We are always looking for oral history tellers.

How about a look at our town through the eyes of a child? That's what our Heritage Walks are all about. We start at Library Park and proceed downtown, stopping at points of historic importance, ending at Heritage Village. These tours never grow old. We **especially** need volunteers to join us on these walks. This is one of the childrens' favorites! **Now is a good time to mention that we'd love to invite you to tag along with us on one of these walks.** We already have three walks scheduled with Mound School. They are the mornings of October 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>. Please... consider coming along with us on one of these walks.

Do you have computer skills... can you do PowerPoint displays? We can sure use you! We have some excellent slide shows that we would like to convert to DVD and use on the new equipment purchased especially for educational use. It's important that we keep our programs fresh and up to date with technology. Can you help?

Are you an idea person... do you think "outside the box"? There is nothing that keeps a program growing like fresh material and people who look at the plans with new eyes. We are definitely not "carved in stone". Bring us your ideas, your experiences, your skills. You will be most welcome!



*Jim Schnapp as frontiersman*

In closing, please consider helping your Society in an area which is fun, takes little time, is seasonal (you get summers off) and is SO important to us and the future of our children. Let's talk about it. Contact me at 866-1784 or judywuerstl@yahoo.com.

# Heritage Village News

By Judy Wuerstl, Heritage Village Volunteer Coordinator



The Heritage Village played host to 15 members of the West Carrollton Historical Society on Sat., August 21. Doug Stamm had pulled the Enterprise carriage into the yard to show it off and we opened our doors. The visitors began their day with a stop at the Market Square Building and then traveled to the Village. Carol O'Connell and Judy Stamm offered cookies and lemonade in the Tavern. Then yours truly told the story of the Gebhart Tavern, as well as the smokehouse. After allowing time to browse and shop, all gathered at the Kercher Pioneer Home, where Bobbye Sweny held forth on the history of that building and included information on the childrens' one-room schoolhouse program that takes place there. All seemed to enjoy the afternoon.

Next on our agenda was hosting the members of the Miamisburg Merchants Association for their "Business After Hours" meeting on Thursday evening, Sept. 9. Around 30 members gathered on the lawn and enjoyed delicious food provided by Chumps. Doug and Judy Stamm came to help. Jeanette Belvo and Carol O'Connell were on hand in costume to answer questions as folks browsed the buildings. After the MMA meeting, Ted Fink spoke, then introduced Judy and Bobbye and we gave our narrative presentations about the Tavern and the Kercher Pioneer Home. It was a wonderful opportunity to promote our Village and our Society.

Our reputation must be spreading. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee has asked to hold their meeting at the Village on Thursday evening, October 7. We love to show off our Village!

Looking ahead, don't forget to put **Old Time Craft Day** on your calendars! It is going to be held on Sunday, October 24, 2:00 to 5:00pm. Many of our previous craftspeople will be demonstrating as well as a few new ones. It's a fun event. Please come and support it.

Volunteers who worked at the Village in August and September were: Bud Colvin, Peggy Critzer, Paul & Loueda Schultz, Bill Stalder, Jay & Angie Robinson, Bobbye Sweny, Judy Frizzel, Mary, Kim & Karen Izor, Marilyn Shade, Carol O'Connell, Pat & Clyde Golden, Mike Kindle, Barbara Daud, Mike Hagan and Jane McGriff. Thanks to all.

## Getting to Know Ourselves

- The Miamisburg Historical Society was organized in **1967 with a membership of 30.**
- In **2010 our membership totals approximately 335.**
- *The Tavern Log* newsletter is mailed bi-monthly to our members in **245 households in 16 states:**  
Ohio, Indiana, Florida, Michigan, Missouri, Colorado, Georgia, California, Alabama, Texas, Maryland, Arizona, Kentucky, New Jersey, West Virginia and Louisiana.
- 85% of our membership lives in Miamisburg and surrounding communities.

## WELCOME NEW CORPORATE MEMBER!

**Nestor Insurance Agency**

## Our Condolences

We send our sincere sympathy to Society members, Jerry and Sherry Barrett and their family on the passing of Jerry's mother, Rose Barrett Bedacht, who died on September 7 at Heartland in Miamisburg.





*Ohio 93rd Volunteer Infantry  
Honor Guard Re-enactors*

## What a Great Memorial Day Weekend!

By Randy Staley, Veterans' Committee Chair

Due to summer vacations and *Tavern Log* printing dates, we're just now able to bring you this news article on the Memorial Day Weekend. Every year I get a great surprise or two during our events. This year my Civil War re-enactor friends, Jeff Gallagher, Mark Holbrook, Mike Rusch and Dan Schoun marched as the 93<sup>rd</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry Honor Guard. Company E of that Regiment was known as the "Burg Boys". They marched from Dayton all the way to Atlanta and back to Nashville from August, 1862 to June, 1865. Along the way they engaged in 18 major battles and numerous skirmishes. My Great Grandfather John Conley Gebhart served with Company E, as did William Kinderdine and over 50 more area men.

The 34 star National Colors the Honor Guard carried this year is an exact replica of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Flag, listing each battle in gold letters on the red stripes. The real chiller is, on May 31, 1868, the Honor Guard marched the same route past Library Park to Hill Grove Cemetery and back again for our first Memorial Day Service in the Park 142 years ago.

## "Happenings" at the Baum Opera House

By Steve Kuhn, Baum Executive Board President

Children's Performing Arts of Miamisburg will present its first ever production on November 5, 6, 12 and 13 at 7:00pm and November 7 and 14 at 3:00pm at the Baum Opera House. Our production of "Godspell" features area children from 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Please visit [www.cpamburg.com](http://www.cpamburg.com) for further information.



One of the biggest off-Broadway and Broadway successes of all time, "Godspell" is based primarily on the Gospel according to St. Matthew. As the cast of actors sing their way through "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord", "Save the People", "Learn Your Lessons Well", "Bless the Lord", "All For the Best", "All Good Gifts", "Turn Back, O Man" and "By My Side", the audience members get to see the parables of Jesus Christ come humanly and threateningly to life.

The Star City Arts Society, which is instrumental in promoting this event, had its first meeting on September 15 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Café in Miamisburg. Their Mission Statement: "Our primary goal is to build a better community by sharing the cultural arts with all citizens of Miamisburg as well as the entire Miami Valley region."

### Planned events:

**"Godspell" by Children's Performing Arts of Miamisburg ♦ Nov. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 ♦ Baum Opera House**  
**Community Arts Festival ♦ December 11 ♦ Downtown Miamisburg**

**There will be no General Meeting  
in November due to the  
Thanksgiving Holiday.**

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## Completing Our Mirus Collection

In our Research Room, we have a collection of Miamisburg "Mirus" yearbooks dating back to 1913. These books have all been donated to the Society by Miamisburg grads or their families.

Can you help? We are always striving to complete our collection by filling in the gaps of the missing years. Following are the years that are still needed:

1910	1965	1984	1993
1911	1971	1987	1994
1912	1974	1988	1995
1918	1980	1989	1996
1953	1981	1992	1997

If you have a Mirus from one of the years listed above and you would like to donate to our collection, please call 859-5000 and leave a message – or stop by the Market Square Building on Wednesdays or Saturdays from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.

## Please Consider This Idea...

As a supporting member of the Miamisburg Historical Society, and in accordance with your interest in preserving and educating citizens about the history of Miamisburg, please consider remembering the Society in your will.

The raising of funds to keep our Society operational is an ever present and continuing challenge. We are dependent solely upon our own fund raising events, membership fees and individual contributions.

We are registered with the Internal Revenue Service as a 501c(3) non-profit organization. Your attorney or financial advisor can assist you in remembering our Historical Society.