

The Auglaize County Historical Society Newsletter

Editors: Katy Gilbert and George Nearingder

40th Anniversary of Auglaize County Historical Society

January, February & March 2004 Edition

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Letter To Our Members From Karen Dietz, President

The Trustees and I invite you to join us on Sunday, March 28th, to celebrate the 40th birthday of the Auglaize County Historical Society. We will celebrate the dedication of hundreds of Auglaize County residents who through the years have worked so diligently to preserve both the county history and the ACHS organization.

The celebration will take the form of an Open House from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Daniel F. Mooney Museum, St. Marys, the Wapakoneta Local History Museum, Wapakoneta, and the Olive Branch Church at Shinbone, St. Rt. 219, East of new Knoxville, with refreshments at all three sites.

The ACHS was chartered in 1963 with its objective to be: discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Auglaize County. We are so grateful to these founders and all those who have followed in their footsteps. Thankful for the use of the Mooney Home and all those who worked so hard to remodel and restore it so that it could be a show case for the bountiful artifacts acquired by the ACHS in those early years.

The Gary Log House, with a dedicated hard working ACHS crew to relocate it, stands as a lasting monument to the early settlers of Auglaize County.

The vision and dedication goes on to purchase the Wapakoneta Women's Club building for a local history museum in Wapakoneta and the vision continues with the acceptance of the Olive Branch Church and the creation of our own web site at www.auglaizecountyhistory.org.

This past year the trustees were very busy preserving -- siding the Mooney Museum, keeping the Gate House at the fairgrounds from being torn down and seeing to it that it got a new roof, wrapping all the exposed wood at both the Wapakoneta History Museum and the Olive Branch Church and closing in the bell tower with louvers at the church.

Yes, forty years later we are still about "discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Auglaize County and the State of Ohio." I believe the ACHS through forty years has followed well in the forming footsteps of its founders.

Plan now to join us in celebrating the dedication of all those people who have helped build the ACHS into what it is today.

Karen Dietz, President

40th Anniversary of Auglaize County Historical Society



How The Historical Society Started

It was in October in 1962 that Verda Ramsey Campbell's third grade class at the West School in St. Marys decided to have a social study project having students working together to obtain articles from the past for an exhibit at the school.

It was Kathleen Chiles who won the contest for naming the exhibit the History, Science and Art Museum. They had on display old clothes, dishes, lamps, pictures, books and many things from the past.

They had the museum opened after their PTA meeting and invited the members to attend. They received many favorable comments on the exhibits. George Scott, Linda Main and Jan Sidenbender were the guides dressed in clothes loaned to the school by St. Marys pioneers residents. The students, teachers and parents stated that a permanent museum should be considered.

Museum Organization Meeting.

On October 8, 1963 an organization meeting was held at McBroom School in St. Marys. The first officers were elected: Verda Ramsey Campbell, President; Ed Noble, Vice President; Louis Comus, Treasurer; and K.C. Geiger, Secretary. Trustees, Mrs. Fred Grewe, Mrs. Julia Tschantz, Mrs. Edrie Bittegar, Mary McClintock, and Miss Katherine Conner. The president appointed the following Committees:

- Finance Committee: Raymond Hartman, Chairman; Ailene Grunden; Fred Wisener; William Uetrecht, and Eldon Montague.
- Publicity Committee: Mrs. Edrie Bittegar, Chairman; Miss Alice Hager; Mrs. Vivian Glass; Walter Myers; and Mrs. Cliff Harris.
- Membership Committee: Miss Katherine Conner, Chairman; Pat Axe; George Neargarder; William Thieman; and Mrs. Velma Schmieder.

On November 12, 1963, the first regular meeting was held in McBroom School cafeteria. Daniel Porter, assistant director of the Ohio Historical Society was the speaker and urged the

society to have its membership county-wide, and have regional representatives in every area to promote the history of the area. Miss Conner reported that her committee has approximately 150 members already signed up through out the county.

Over the next 15 years the historical society board meetings were held in both St. Marys and Wapakoneta and other communities through out the county. Donations were stored in the St. Marys Area chamber of commerce basement and membership meetings were held in the Community Room in the Midwest Electric Office building.

We Thank All Our Members For Their Support!



One Hundred Year Certificates.



In 1971, the first Certificates were awarded to families who had farms in the same family name for 100 years or more. In 1975 Ancestral Certificates to farms that were in the same families (not necessarily the same family *name*) for 100 years. Today the Historical Society awards Certificates for Farms, Business or Homes that are in the same family 100 years or more.

The oldest farm certificate awarded in 1971 was to Mary Ethel Armstrong. Her family acquired the farm in 1818 in St. Marys Township, in section 10.

On November 2, 2003, there were 22 certificates awarded for farms in the same families for 100 years and older. 15 certificates awarded for farms in the same families for 150 years and older. 4 certificates for homes 100 years or older in the same families and 2 certificate awarded for businesses -- one for over 100 years and one for over 150 years.

Barb Harrod was chairperson assisted by Julie McCullough, Betty Bulp, Judy Waesch, Don Regula, Barb Vogel, Jim McCullough, Linda and Dale Turner, George and Janet Gibson, and Don Hager.



Cracker Barrel Days

In 1973 after several successful auctions at the Auglaize County Fair Grounds the Society decided to expand along with the auction to have lunch stands, few arts and crafts, stgeam and gas engines and entertainment in 1974 to raise funds. They also sold badges.

In 1973 the Auglaize County Historical Society news was first printed. It consisted of one page informing the members about meetings and activities. Today this is our newsletter.



40th Anniversary of Auglaize County Historical Society



Mooney Home Donated To Historical Society



In 1968, Auglaize County Historical Society accepted the property at 223 South main Street, in St. Marys as a museum donated by Mrs. Carrie Mooney Bettelini. She would live in the home until her death and in memory of her husband it would be called "The Daniel Mooney Museum."

In 1980, a year after her death, volunteers cleaned, painted and opened the home as a museum in 1981.

The home was built in 1876 by Major Charles Hipp, Civil War officer and former St. Marys mayor and Post Master for 21 years and 9 months.



In 1922 it was purchased by Mr. & Mrs. Daniel Mooney. He was elected in 1906 as an Ohio State Senator and in 1914 President Woodrow Wilson chose him to serve as Ambassador to Paraguay. After his death in 1930, Mrs. Mooney married Mr. Bettelini and it became their home.



Mooney Museum Remodeled.

In 1995-96 remodeling was done at the museum. Plate glass from the windows of Clear's Shoe store was used to make permanent exhibits in the museum. today you can walk through the museum at your leisure, read the many explanation cards and find out much of the past of Auglaize County.

The museum contains many exhibits. Just to mention a few, here's a collection of artifacts from Fort St. Marys and Fort Amanda, model Oil Derrick, School exhibit, photos of Gordon Amusement Park, How the County was formed, Miami Erie Canal, Spoke Works and more.

The Kuffner Family has a large exhibit of Doctor Kuffner's memorabilia when she served in the United States Armed Forces.

In recent years the Mooney Museum was painted, due to its deterioration, the trustees decided to put vinyl siding on the home. New gutters, down spouts, and porch painting will happen this spring. The St. Marys Kiwanis removed all of the old shrubs and plans are in the works for landscaping by spring.

The museum is open on the first and third Sunday of the months from April to December. It is also open by appointment, and many of the schools bus their students to see the museum. Clubs and organizations are also welcome to visit the museum.



Gary Log House Donated.



The Gary Log House was built about 1850 on State Route 720 one mile west of the village of Santa Fe.

The log house was donated to the Auglaize County Historical Society by Mrs. Ilo Gary Bailey in 1980 in memory of her father C. W. Gary.

It was moved to the Auglaize County Fairgrounds and is open during fair week with special exhibits.

We Thank All Our Members For Their Support!



Log Smoke House Donated.

In 1983, Harold Dammeyer of St. Marys donated a log Smoke house that was built in 1880. It was moved to the fairgrounds and placed beside the Gary Log House.

This smoke house was located on the former Julius Frederick Farm. He was one of the [Survivors of the Greely Expedition to the North Pole in 1881](#) and was rescued three years later.



Statue of Justice Restored

1994 was the 100th Anniversary of the Auglaize County Court House. The Auglaize County Historical Society spearheaded a drive to restore the Statue of Justice that at one time stood on the top of the court house. They found the head, two arms and the sword and the balance had to be hand built at a cost of \$30,000.

An old-fashioned penny-drive called "Copper Pennies for a Copper Lady" was held which netted 453,589 pennies with 3,200 school children participating to help restore the Statue. Many organizations, businesses and individuals are recognized in the Court House for their support.

Judge Fred Pepple commissioned Patricia Wietholter of New Knoxville to paint a picture of the court house. In her painting she had the moon in the background. Neil Armstrong agreed to sign 250 prints of the painting that sold for \$150 each and the money was split between the Auglaize County Crippled Children and Adults Organization and the Historical Society. With Neil's help we were able to complete the Statue project in 1994.



Historic Freight House Saved.

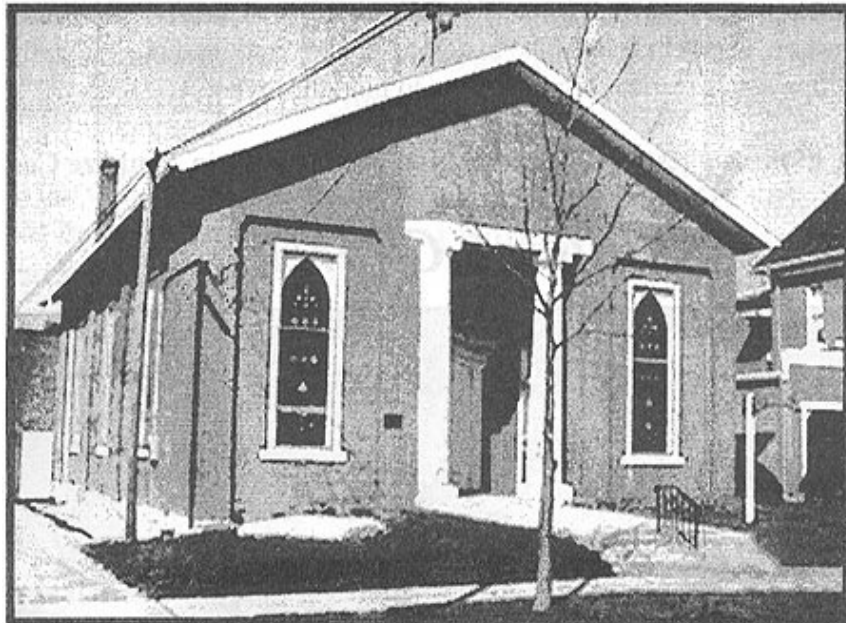
In 1994 the 1898 T&OC Railroad Freight House that was located on South Blackhoof Street in Wapakoneta was to be demolished. the Auglaize County Historical Society received many calls to save the building and use it as a museum. Donations were received for the project but before it was completed the Women's Club offered to sell their building for a Wapakoneta Museum.

The Fair Board offered to finish the building (the freight house) and use it for maintenance and storage. A sign was placed on the building listing the donors that helped in saving this historic building.

40th Anniversary of Auglaize County Historical Society



Society Buys Women's Club Building



In 1997, the Auglaize County Historical society purchased the Women's Club Building in Wapakoneta for a museum. It was constructed in 1860 as a Presbyterian Church. The New Covenant Christian church was renting the building and remained there until they moved to a new location in March 1999.

When the court house replaced all their windows in 1999, they were donated to the museum to construct exhibit cases with the plate glass. Dale Altstaetter, with his carpentry skills volunteered many weeks in designing and constructing exhibit cases. they had volunteers to help move the Zint Observatory to the museum. A large exhibit of butter churns that were manufactured in Wapakoneta was placed on loan to the museum.

People are amazed at the large county map showing all the one-room schools in the county. Many old class photos were copied and are on exhibit but they need help to obtain many that are missing. They have many other exhibits of band director Harry Shannon, Jr., Wapakoneta Telephone Service Company, fire equipment, many U.S. Service uniforms and medals, two Kreitzer buggies and many photos. You must see it to believe it!

The museum is open in the afternoon on the first and third sunday of the months from April

to December. It is also open by appointments for members, school classes, clubs and organizations who are always welcome to visit.



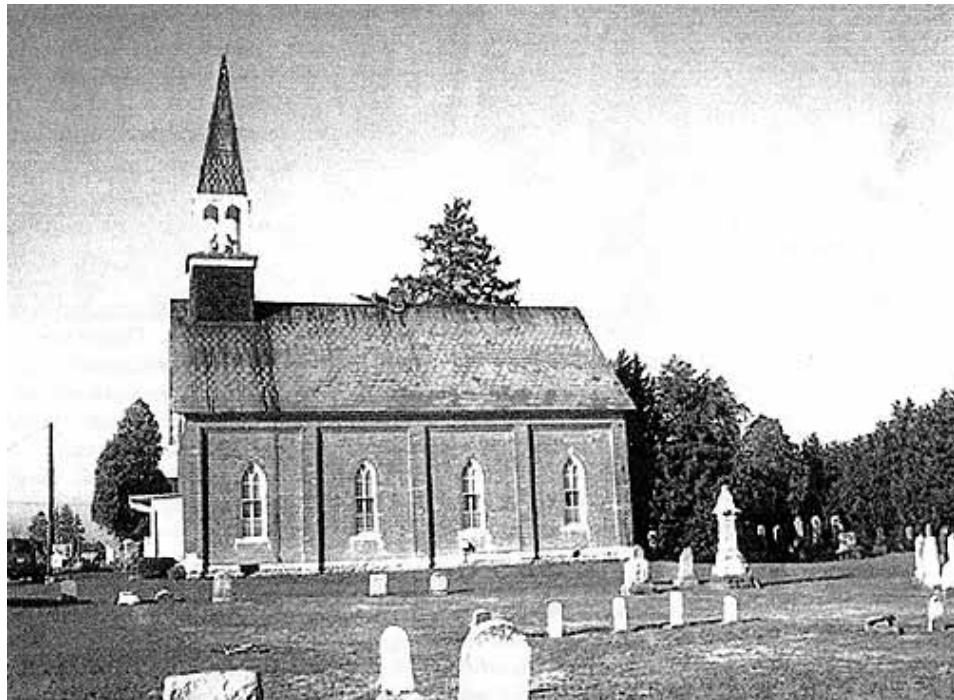
Auglaize County Sesquicentennial in 1997

The Auglaize County Historical Society was asked by the County Commissioners to organize the Sesquicentennial celebration. The historical society solicited representatives from the county townships and historical organizations to plan this event.

This was one of the biggest events ever put on county wide in Auglaize County.



Shinbone Church



Shinbone Church is located on State Route 219, 4 miles East of New Knoxville

In 2003 Olive Branch Church in Shinbone and all of its contents were donated to the Auglaize County Historical Society. The church been open continuously for 160 years when it closed on January 1, 2002.

On June 29, 2003 a reception was held at the church to honor the nineteen Civil War Veterans and two veterans from the War of 1812 that are buried in their small cemetery aside of the church.



Bicentennial Marker Dedicated

On July 20, 2003, at a special ceremony the Dudley Nichols Bicentennial Marker was unveiled on the corner of Blackhoof and Main Streets in Wapakoneta. The Wapakoneta Local History Museum also had teh film screenwriter's memorabilia on exhibit, including the Oscar that he received for his screen writing of the 1935 classic, "The Informer."

We Thank All Our Members For Their Support!



This newsletter contains just a sample of what the Auglaize County Historical Society has done, in the county, for the last 40 years. Our next newsletter will have photos and the locations of the markers that have been placed through out Auglaize County.

Many good projects were completed, over the years, by our members. We are thankful to all of you for the great work and accomplishments through these 40 years.



PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR 2004 *Membership Meetings*

May 29th W.W. II Monument dedication at the St. Marys Theatre. Event will be shown on the big screen live from Washington D. C. Event to honor local W. W. II veterans.

July 15th Stories and Memories of Neil Armstrong, Moon Landing etc.

September 2nd Preserving Archival Documents

November 4th Civil War Readings by Dr. Todd Spieles at Shinbone Church



Ask Your Friends To Join **Auglaize County Historical Society**

- Adult Member \$15.00
- Family Member \$25.00
- Student Member \$5.00
- 62 or older Sr. Adult Member \$12.00
- 62 or older Sr. Family Member \$20.00
- Life Member \$250.00

Make check payable to: Auglaize County Historical Society
Mail to: Anna Mae Saum, 131 Bayshore Court, St. Marys, Ohio 45885

"We are Saving History Now for Future Generations."



40 YEAR CELEBRATION
Sunday, March 28, 2004
1 P.M. TO 4 P.M. AT

DANIEL MOONEY MUSEUM, ST. MARYS, OHIO

WAPAKONETA LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM, WAPAKONETA, OHIO

OLIVE BRANCH CHURCH MUSEUM, SHINBONE - SR 219 - EAST OF NEW
KNOXVILLE

REFRESHMENTS AT ALL THREE SITES.

**WELCOME TO OUR OPEN HOUSE AT ALL OUR MUSEUMS
COME AND BRING A FRIEND!**



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