

*Auglaize County Historical Society Newsletter*

# History at a Glance

**Volume 3, Issue 3   Summer 2008**

## Society hosts Gravestone Workshop

Some two-dozen persons attended the Auglaize County Historical Society's second "Gravestones for Novices" workshop about historic cemeteries and their preservation on June 14 at the former Olive Branch Church, Shinbone. The church is the property of the Historical Society, while the cemetery itself is owned and maintained by the Washington Township trustees.

The featured presenter was the Graveyard Groomer himself, John Walters, of Connersville, Indiana. John, his wife Micki, and their employee Kelly Luke trained participants in methods to clean, level, and reset tombstones using proper techniques and materials. Workshop attendees then practiced (supervised by Walters) what they had learned by restoring tombstones in the old church cemetery.

Attendees, who represented Auglaize County and communities far from our borders (e.g., Beavercreek, Springboro, Fostoria, Zanesville, and even Little Falls, Minnesota) included historians, genealogists, township and church trustees, cemetery caretakers, and others interested in preserving this unique aspect of local history.

The Historical Society is now assembling a crew of volunteers to assist with further restoration at Shinbone. You need not have attended the workshop to participate. Depending upon the volunteers' schedules, we will schedule workday mid-week or on Saturday. Call the office if you're interesting in helping. We need you!

Lowell Quellhorst and Daryl Koenig, trustees of the German Protestant Cemetery (New Bremen), were among the June 14 participants. The cemetery subsequently hired the Graveyard Groomer to restore some of its "very worst and dangerously leaning tombstones." This work will be conducted in September.

*Right: scenes from the cemetery workshop*

## **Historical Society Plans Fall Bus Trip**

The Historical Society is in the final stages of planning its fall bus trip, scheduled for Friday, September 26. The bus will head northeast, with the historic communities of Oberlin and Wellington in Lorain County as our destination.

Inasmuch as New Bremen and Wapakoneta are celebrating their 175th anniversaries this year, we thought it only fitting that the historical society visit another birthday community. Oberlin was founded in 1833, the same year as the world-renowned Oberlin College. Until the beginning of the Civil War, the community was an integral stop on the Underground Railroad. Oberlin has it all - the quiet life of a small town, the services of a large city, and the music and art of the world. It has been called "the most cosmopolitan small town in America."

The community has a rich and diverse history, representing many different cultures and interests. The charm of Oberlin can be found in the many tree-lined streets, in a historic downtown with unique shops and a variety of restaurants, and most importantly, in its people.

We'll visit museums, historic houses, shops, and take in a great lunch!

We'll also travel to nearby Wellington, with its amazing collection of 19th century architecture. Wellington is also home to the Spirit of 76 museum, created to honor the life and work of native Archibald Willard, whose remarkable Spring of '76 painting touched a nation and the world.

All that and more, for a full day with friends new and old. The cost is \$70 for historical society members and \$80 for non-members. If you've traveled with us before, you'll automatically receive an informational flier and registration form. If not, call the office, 738-9328, and we'll send one out.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

in the area...

The Village of Botkins and Village of Anna will host a Building Doctor Clinic on Thursday, October 9, 7 p.m., at Botkins Local School, 208 N. Sycamore. The Ohio Historic Preservation office provides the clinics to teach old-building owners how to recognize and solve some of the most common sources of problems. Peeling paint? Failing plaster? Wet basements? Deteriorating masonry? Building Doctor is for you. Free, but call 614/298-2000 to register.

The Allen County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogy Society and the Allen County Historical Society are co-sponsoring a Beginning Genealogy Class on October 11 and 25, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Lunch is on your own. For more information, contact Dwayne Grace at dgrace@woh.rr.com.



## Wapakoneta Anniversary to include Film Festival

Wapakoneta's 175<sup>th</sup> Birthday will embrace a modern medium in August, when the anniversary committee presents the Dudley Nichols Film Festival on Sunday, August 17, at the historic Wapa Theatre in downtown Wapakoneta.

The committee will screen four of Nichols' best known works: *Bringing Up Baby* (1 p.m.), *The Bells of St. Marys* (3 p.m.), the Academy Award-winning *The Informer* (7 p.m.), and *Stagecoach* (9 p.m.). The showings are free and open to the public. Now in the possession of his family, Nichols' Academy Award will also be on exhibit at the theatre during the festival.

Dudley Nichols was born and raised in Wapakoneta, and graduated from Blume High School in 1913. After serving in the U.S. Navy in World War I and then working as a newspaper reporter, Nichols moved to Hollywood to try his hand at screenwriting.

Nichols wrote the screen plays for more than sixty movies. He refused his Oscar for *The Informer*, becoming the first person to reject the award. He made this decision in protest of Hollywood's policies toward screenwriters. Nichols served as president of the Screen Writers Guild of America in 1937 and 1938. (He eventually acquiesced and kept the Oscar.)

The day will also include a benefit dinner for Downtown Wapakoneta Partnership. For more information about the film festival or dinner, call Rachel Barber.

## MADE IN AUGLAIZE COUNTY

The combined historical societies of Auglaize County have created an exhibit that honors Auglaize County's industrial and manufacturing heritage from the 19th and 20th centuries. The New Bremen and Wapakoneta components of the exhibit will tour the two communities in August and September. August 11- September 5: the exhibit will be located adjacent to New Bremen Coffee Co. & Books, 107 West Monroe Street, New Bremen.

September 15-30: the exhibit will appear in Wapakoneta at the Auglaize County Public District Library, and will be available for viewing during regular library hours.

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## Auglaize County Historical Society

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The Auglaize County Historical Society was founded in 1963. Its mission is the “discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Auglaize County and the State of Ohio.”

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

AUGLAIZECOUNTYHISTORY.ORG

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*There's never been a better time  
to be part of the Auglaize  
County Historical Society!*

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Save the Date! Artifact Show at Shinbone on October 5!

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**Troop 4 Boy Scouts of Wapakoneta assisted the Historical Society in honoring New Bremen and Wapakoneta on their birthdays . Here are the scouts, banner, and giant cake at the beginning of Wapakoneta's June 21 parade. Thanks as well to J&L Power Equipment, Wapakoneta, for providing the lawn tractor, and to Blaine Kohler, and Kelli, Haley, and Leah Schattschneider for their cake decorating expertise.**