Ottawa County Historical Society

www.ottawacountyhistory.org Second Quarter 2019

2019

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Corresponding Secretary, Oral History Chairman, Newsletter Editor
Martha Dykes ~ 419-732-1843

Ohio Historical Marker Dedication
May 25th, noon
At Marblehead Lighthouse

On May25th at noon and on the grounds of the Marblehead Lighthouse, The Ottawa County Historical Society and The Ohio History Connection will be dedicating a new Ohio Historical Marker.

One side the marker tells the story of William Kelly and the building of the lighthouse and the other side gives a history of the Keepers of the Light. beginning with Benajah and Rachel Wolcott, the first keepers.

We hope to have a good attendance and would be honored by your presence. You may email me with your response or any questions you might have at

bee2vn1827@gmail.com.

Please excuse this rather informal means of inviting you. (I lost my staff when I retired!)

PAUL C. MOON, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
OTTAWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Catawba Island Historical Society Lecture
June 12, at 6:30 p.m.
Catawba Island Township Hall
3307 NW Catawba Road

The first presentation of the 2019 Cultural Lecture Series will be John Burke, Treasurer of Medina County and an avid student of Native American cultures since childhood. John will be costumed in self-made, authentic clothing that would have been worn by Indian tribes that inhabited this area. Part of his presentation will be made by portraying Captain Wolf, a Delaware brave who observed the 1813 Battle of Lake Erie.

From the President's Desk.....

We Got This Right

As a newbie to the area (of merely one score and four years), I'll be forever in the mode of catching up on stories that make our legacy. It was nothing short of pure delight on Sunday afternoon, May 5, to hear from guest speakers Terry Breymaier and Larry Michaels the telling of the Pierre Navarre story at our Spring Members' Meeting in the Elmore Barn.

Navarre was an integral player in Northwest Ohio history, especially through his gutsy and often clandestine activities on the side of his country in the War of 1812. Long after, living into the 1870s, he was also a major force behind pushing our backward area out of the Great Black Swamp and into the significant cultural and economic roles it came to play in development of America in the late 19th Century. All the while, he remained a simple, humble man who preferred to live in the woods as a fur trader. On a personal note, I appreciated learning from Breymaier and Michaels, both descendants of the huge Navarre family, that he was the uncle of another famous fur trader, another Pierre Navarre, with whom I was familiar as the founder of South Bend, Indiana, where I once lived.

Enhancing the richness of the event even more were the unique surroundings in which the story was told: the Elmore Barn, home to the Elmore Historical Society, a true local treasure, with its displays of historical artifacts that line the walls, many of which seem poised to launch into the air from upper lofts.

But richness, of course, cannot be contained in the structured molecules of "old stuff" any more than it would find its breath in the syllables of tales re-told. Represented at our organization's Spring Meeting luncheon, besides the Elmore Historical Society, were none other than the Catawba Island Historical Society, the Ida Rupp Library, the Ottawa County Museum, the Port Clinton Lighthouse Conservancy, the Harris-Elmore Library, the Ottawa County Genealogical Society, the East Toledo Historical Society…whew! And, if you add in the pleasure of having Dick and Susan Taylor at the table, you could even say the Curtice Grange was there too!

Hold on…"represented" isn't the right word. None of these organizations were present in any official capacity. It wasn't like a congress of individual organizational interests. The "interest" we enjoyed was nothing pre-arranged or prescribed. And therein lies the gist of the point I'm making here. The event was almost, as we would have said in the sixties, a "happening" instead of a meeting.

Looking around the room, one felt the palpable eagerness that drew folks from all over Ottawa County—and from beyond. It was an eagerness not made of looking back, but of looking at each other, at how we got here, who got us here, and what we have become from humble (very humble) beginnings.

After a tour of the Depot, on the way home, as we followed the twists and turns of the now-paved original trail aside the Portage River, I thought about the Spring Meeting: "You know, I think we got this right."

PATRICK O'KEEFFE

Navarre descendant, Terry Braymaier and speaker, Larry Michaels with OCHS President, Patrick O'Keeffe

Rich Norgaard, OCHS Vice President and Rick Claar, President of the Elmore Historical Society

The Voyage of the Onward Presentation

On Wednesday, June 26th, at 6:30 p.m., the Historical Society will sponsor a viewing of Bob Reynold's video about the voyage of the *Onward*. Scott Matthews, of Bascom, Ohio, built the boat and sailed it on what has become known as the "Great Loop," a journey from the Great Lakes to the Great Lakes by way of the Mississippi, the Gulf, around the tip of Florida, up the Atlantic Coast, and through the Saint Lawrence Seaway. But in 1906, it was accomplished by way of the Erie Canal. That was the year he made that trip, the first person to ever try it, and with his family on board, including Bob Reynold's mother who, at the time, was an infant! Luckily for posterity, a photographer went along as a crewman and took many photos, which make up the fascinating visual part of Bob's presentation. At the conclusion of the trip, Matthews decided to move his business to Port Clinton from Bascom, and it became the Matthews Boat Company.

The free presentation will be open to the public at 6:30 p.m. at the Ida Rupp Public Library in Port Clinton.

PATRICK

Like to Cook?

If you like to cook, and especially if you have an interest in hearth cooking as was done in the 1800s, please contact Becky Shemenski at 419-898-3852 or at:

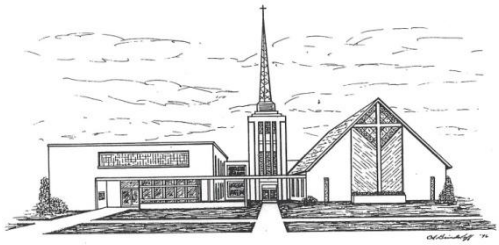
becky.f.ski@gmail.com.

There still is a need for help with hearth cooking and a need for a fire builder, one to build and keep the fire at the correct temperature for cooking and baking during demonstrations.

We have lots of fun demonstrating hearth cooking during our events open to the public and offering samples of our results!

2019 Spring Cleaning at the Keeper's House

Trinity United Methodist Church
Port Clinton
Celebrates 185 Years in 2019



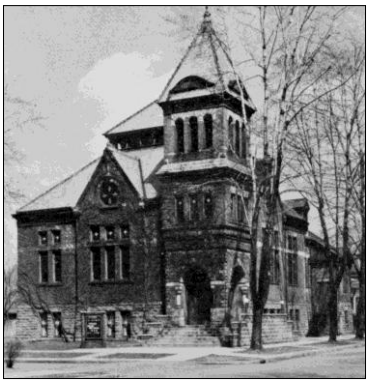
Port Clinton, Ohio was founded in June 1828. There is evidence that Methodists were in this area as early as 1829. The first Methodist meetings in Port Clinton were held around 1834, six years after the founding of Port Clinton.

In Port Clinton, meetings of the First Methodist Episcopal Church were held in the home of Joseph Sylvester. By 1833, Reverends Austin, Wilcox and Allen visited this community as part of the Lower Sandusky Circuit. From 1834, such services were held regularly in Port Clinton.

Port Clinton's first schoolhouse was built in 1838. Meetings were held there. In 1840, the first courthouse was erected. The courtroom became a place for Sunday services for more than a decade. In 1838, the church had 76 members and the village had fewer than sixty homes.

The first church building was erected in 1852 on the northeast corner of Second and Lower Market Space [now Adams Street] which is the site of the present church. Much of the labor was donated by members. It was a single room and like all pioneer churches was for preaching only. It was heated by two wood stoves and lighted by kerosene lamps. The bell was placed on a platform on the ground. It was rung by treading with their feet. Joseph Sylvester and others shared that obligation. It was not until about 1873 that the vestibule and steeple were built. The bell was then raised to the tower and put in place by Capt. William Duff. The church was dedicated on August 5, 1853.

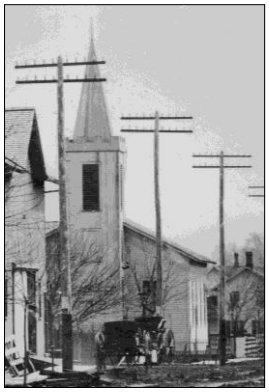
The first parsonage was built south of the corner of the present church at 211 East Market Space [now Adams Street] where St. John Lutheran Church now stands. This served as the parsonage until another one was built north of the church in 1875. The first parsonage was then sold. The house was a two-story home that was cut into two one story houses that were relocated to Walnut street.



Church dedicated in 1890
~ Ottawa Co. Museum

By 1888, the membership had grown to 153. A new church was needed. The old frame church was moved across Adams Street and placed in the Market Space [now the Adams Street Park] for use while a new brick church was being built on the old site. After the congregation moved into the new church the frame church building was sold to George St. John and it was removed to the Portage riverfront and converted into a storehouse. It was later destroyed by fire.

This brick church was razed and the present church building was dedicated in 1964. On January 16, 1963 at a service of deconsecration was held. During the years 1954 to 1961 the Fellowship Hall was built on the north side of the church. The new educational building was constructed, completed and in use by June 1, 1958. This building, from January 23, 1963 until May 10, 1964, became the temporary sanctuary during the demolition and removal of the old church proceeded and until the new church was completed. June 30, 1963 the groundbreaking ceremony for the new church building was held.



First Methodist Episcopal Church
in 1852 in the same location as the current church building.
~ Ottawa Co. Museum

Saturday, July 13, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Keeper's House
9999 E. Bayshore Road, Marblehead

The Ottawa County Historical Society hosts the Port Clinton Rotary Club Perch Wagon. Perch dinners and sandwiches with a side of hand-cut French fries will be available from the Rotary Perch Wagon-Ottawa County's own 'food truck' Saturday. Tables will be provided to eat on the grounds of the historic stone home of Benajah and Rachel Wolcott, first keepers of the Marblehead Lighthouse. Carry out also available.

Becky Shemenski and her fireplace crew will provide a hearth cooking demonstration. Tours of the restored residence and cemetery will be ongoing through the day, as will browsing for souvenirs and local history books at the adjacent Annex/farm museum.

The Keeper's House stone exterior was recently restored to its 19th Century integrity, revealing the original quality stonework. The house is a living history project of the Ottawa County Historical Society. It is supported by donations, grants, and fundraisers. Tickets for the annual drawing will be available at the Annex for $1 each or 6 for $5. Prizes include a copy of the book, *History of Ottawa County, the First 175 Years*; a framed Ben Richmond print, *Holiday Hearth*; and a gift certificate from Starcher Enterprises of Marblehead. The annual drawing is during the October 12th Lighthouse Festival Civil War Encampment.

Ottawa County Museum

Resumes Summer Hours

The Ottawa County Museum, 126 W. Third St., Port Clinton, will resume summer hours after Memorial Day and continue until Labor Day. Beginning May 28th, the museum will be open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from noon to 3 p.m. or by appointment (call Peggy Debien at 419-732-1039). Admission is free and the museum is handicap accessible.

Membership Drive

The Ottawa County Museum membership years runs from May 1 to April 30 annually. The museum is currently holding a membership drive and an application will be sent to those who call the museum at 419-732-2237.

Ottawa County Civil War Diaries

The Ottawa County Museum has recently received the Civil War diaries of George O. Bailey, which are available for viewing in the museum. George O. Bailey is related to the Kleinhans and Wonnell families in Ottawa County. His parents are buried in the Catawba Island cemetery. His granddaughter in Winchester, VA donated the diaries. More research is being conducted to find family members, and anyone who can help with the research should call the museum. The museum also needs a volunteer to help transcribe the diaries. Call Peggy at 419-732-1039 to volunteer or make an appointment to see the diaries.

Upcoming Programs about Native Americans

Dr. Randy Buchman, known for his extensive research on Native Americans of Ohio spoke last year as part of the Catawba Island Historical Society's lecture series. After describing the spirituality of the Indian culture and their close relationship with the earth, his lecture ended with a suggestion that we pay more attention to the values/culture of the Indians.

On June 18, the Ottawa County Genealogy Society has invited author Frank Kuron to speak on Tecumseh. The program will take place at the Port Clinton Library at 7 p.m. Kuron, author of *Thus Fell Tecumseh*, explores the legends surrounding the death of the great Shawnee leader, Tecumseh.

Kuron will speak to the Ottawa County Historical Society for their November 10th meeting on Tecumseh and Williams Henry Harrison. The meeting will be held at the Catawba Island Club November 10th.

Author Frank Kuron lives in Toledo and is well recognized for his research on Tecumseh and local tribes of Northwest Ohio. These lectures will provide yet another opportunity to become familiar with the native people.

Saturday, August 17th is the date of the second Port Clinton Lighthouse Festival. The festival will feature a variety of programs and events including a special collection of local history stories as told by OCHS and Playmakers story tellers.

NANCY DUNHAM

Port Clinton Lighthouse Summer Plans

The Port Clinton Lighthouse Conservancy is preparing to kick off its 2019 season with on Saturday, May 25, when the Port Clinton Lighthouse opens for tours. On Saturday, June 1, at 11 a.m., there will be a dedication ceremony for the newly constructed Keeper's Boathouse, a replica of the original constructed from plans obtained from the National Archives. Mayor Mike Snider will officiate. Members of the public are invited.

The new revised tour schedule will have the lighthouse open on Saturdays from noon to 5pm and on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., from May 25 through September 2. In addition, the lighthouse will be open on Memorial Day, the Fourth of July, and Labor Day, from noon until 5 p.m.

Another change this year concerns the annual festival, which is now being called the Port Clinton Lighthouse & Maritime Festival and will be held the third Saturday in August, coinciding with International Lighthouse and Lightship Day. This year it falls on August 17th. The new, expanded festival will open at 10:30 a.m. with a Coast Guard Color Guard and remarks by U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur, and will run until 5 p.m.

RICH NORGARD

Please mail me the following items.

Item	Description	Price each	Shipping/ Handling each	Tax each	X Quantity	Total
Book	*Along the Highways & Waterways of Ottawa County* **NEW!!**	$20.00	$4.00	$1.68		
Book	*History of Ottawa County - The First 175 Years*	$49.95	$5.00	$3.85		
Book	Volume I: *How We Got Here, What We Did*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Volume II: *Recollections and Voices*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Volume III: *Across the Townships*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Volume IV: *Threads and Textures of a Tapestry*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Volume V: *Ottawa County Through Their Eyes*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Volume VI: *Memories and Adventures*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Complete set of Oral Histories: Volume 1 through VI	$90.00	$6.00	$6.72		
Book	*Combined Atlas of Ottawa County - 1874 & 1900 NEW PRICE*	$15.00	$4.00	$1.33		
Book	Historic Driving Tour Guide: *Historic Railroads of **Western** Ottawa County*	$4.00	$2.00	$0.42		
Book	Historic Driving Tour Guide: *Historic Railroads of **Eastern** Ottawa County*	$4.00	$2.00	$0.42		
Book	*The Keeper's House* - children's coloring/activity book	$3.00	$2.00	$0.35		
Book	History of Ottawa County Historical Society	$7.00	$3.00	$0.70		
Book	*Hearth Cookbook*	$5.00	$3.00	$0.56		
DVD	Bicentennial War of 1812 Re-enactment: *The Skirmish on the Peninsula*	$15.00	$2.00	$1.19		
Book	*Marblehead Lighthouse on Lake Erie* by James Proffitt	$15.00	$3.00	$1.26		
Book	*Lights at the Portage* by Richard J. Norgard	$10.00	$3.00	$0.91		
Book	*Lake Erie's West Sister Island* by Martha Dykes	$10.00	$3.00	$0.91		
					TOTAL	

Note: if books are being picked up do not include shipping/handling charge.

Please, recalculate 7% tax based on the item price only.

PLEASE PRINT Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Please, make your check payable to the Ottawa County Historical Society and mail it to:

Ottawa County Historical Society, P.O. Box 385, Port Clinton, OH 43452

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OTTAWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2019 - ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES - due in January of each year

(If your address label does not say 2019 or Life Member it is time to pay dues.)

Single $15_____ Family $25_____ Student $10_____

Sustaining $35_____ Sponsor $50_____ Patron $100 or more $_____

Contributions $_____ Keeper's House $_____ Other $_____

The OCHS is a non-profit organization.. Your contribution may be tax deductible.

Name_____

Address/City/State/Zip_____

Phone Number_____

Email_____

Total enclosed_____ Date_____ Check #_____

Mail to: OCHS, P.O. Box 385, Port Clinton, OH 43452

☐ **I am interested in volunteering.**