Ottawa County Historical Society

www.ottawacountyhistory.org September 2018

2018 Officers and Trustees

President
Patrick O'Keeffe ~ 419-635-5579

Vice President
Richard Norgard ~ 419-797-2917

Secretary
Linda Huber ~ 419-702-7060

Treasurer
Brennan Madison - 419-341-1538

Corresponding Secretary
Martha Dykes ~ 419-732-1843

Trustees
Paul Moon - 419-276-6593
Nancy Dunham ~ 419-797-2244
Jennifer Fording - 419-862-3807
Kathleen Giesler ~ 419-707-2100
Linda Huber ~ 419-702-7060
Kathy Leonard ~ 419-734-9365
Richard Norgard ~ 419-797-2917
Patrick O'Keeffe ~ 419-732-8871
Becky Shemenski ~ 419-898-3852
John Starcher ~ 419-656-0095

Oral History Chairman
Martha Dykes ~ 419-732-1843

Membership Chairman
Linda Huber ~ 419-702-7060

Keeper's House Committee
Paul Moon - 419-276-6593
Bill Coder - 419-798-5832
John Starcher ~ 419-656-0095
Rich Yakir - 440-842-8587

Program Chair
Nancy Dunham ~ 419-797-2244

Newsletter Editor
Martha Dykes ~ 419-732-1843

Cast iron kettle presented to the Keeper's House cooking crew by Bill Tuttamore in honor of his late wife, Lois, who cooked with them.

Ray presents a collection of pictures of Lois Tuttamore's fireplace cooking adventures to Bill Tuttamore.

Bill Tuttamore and his family by the Keeper's House hearth.

Ray Machar, Becky Shemenski and Kathy Leonard with the Tuttamore family.

From the President's Desk.....
A Chance to Bud

To have a good understanding of where you're going, you need to have at least some idea of where you've been. The "you" in this simple equation is the universal you, meaning—well, meaning me.

I didn't have a very good idea, which in turn generated a downright bad idea: implementing a newly configured budget.

Oh, the idea itself wasn't bad when it started out—fully primed with good intentions, all right, with lots of input from bits of experience in this sort of thing. It was the implementing part that was a disaster. Now, to implement something—bear with me, I'm a farm boy, and the term implement carries with it certain connotations—is a lot like putting plow to earth, turning over new ground.

Trouble is, before you go tearing up the lower forty with visions of the bumper crop of your own great idea, you—that would be me—maybe ought to see if somebody before you already has something planted there. Not only planted, but they've been tending it all along, reaping for all the rest of us for years the fruits of their unselfish and unheralded labors.

I'm talking here about the Oral History folks, Janet Stephenson, Peggy Debien, Sandy Zenser, Nancy Dunham, and most-recent participant, Joy Noren. And I'm talking about Martha Dykes, not only an integral player in this group, but who so unceremoniously jumps into any number of roles for the Ottawa County Historical Society—by the way, one of which happens to be compiling and publishing this newsletter.

So, about the new budget—great idea, right? Yes, a great idea because, after all, an organization must have effective procedures in place for planning and accounting for its funds. But "effective" means being made up of procedures that reflect what people actually do.

When the Oral History folks submitted an expense recently incurred in the course of performing one of their many ongoing activities, I—somewhat officiously, I might add—pointed out that said expense did not appear in the new budget approved by the Board.

Their response: what new budget?

Surprise! Talk about egg on your — that would be my — face.

Well, being relatively new to the Society, and real new as its president, I could probably get away with pleading ignorance.

Ignorance is no excuse. The fact that we — that would be I — expected you to follow budgetary procedures that you didn't even know about much less participate in designing is, at best, laughable. Please allow me take the space allotted me in this newsletter to apologize to you, Janet, Peggy, Sandy, Nancy, and Joy, and especially to Martha for being — somewhat officiously, I might add — so inconsiderate. Day after day, you do all the things you, which most of us don't even know the half of, while all of us are the full beneficiaries of your insights, creativity, and just plain hard work.

And thank you Martha, Peggy, and Brennan Madison for sitting down with me in the effort to plow up some of that ignorance, hopefully turning up some new ground in which a little sprout of learning may actually show itself.

Oh — about that new budget? With detailed input from everyone involved, I'm guessing that, for 2019, it maybe has a chance to bud toward a great idea.

PATRICK O'KEEFFE

Spring Cleaning-2018

The cool weather and occasional drizzles aside, the frontier home is made ready for our 30th year at the Keeper's House! This year the merry band of cleaners included our faithful Scouts and members of the Society. From inside floor sweeping and washing to outside yard work, including a trip to the cellar, a good day's work was capped by pizza at noon. (*Photos by OCHS member Kathy Leonard)*

Keeper's Boathouse Completed

The Port Clinton Lighthouse Conservancy has completed construction of a faithful replica of the original Keeper's Boathouse that housed the launch used by the various light keepers beginning with its construction in 1902 until 1952. It stood in the Portage River at the south end of the east pier until 1952, when it was placed in the park. The city used it for storage for a time. Despite efforts to save it, the structure was torn down by the city in 2010. The Conservancy discovered the original construction plans for the boathouse while conducting research on the lighthouse at the National Archives and decided to build a replica.

Construction began in early spring at Minderman Marine Products in Port Clinton and the completed Boathouse was move dot Waterworks Park on August 8. In early September the boathouse will be placed on steel piling in the Derby Pond and will provide a base from which to conduct tours, sell merchandise, and share the history of the lighthouse. A dedication ceremony will be scheduled for later this year.

RICH NORGARD

Boathouse at Derby Pond
photo courtesy Rich Norgard

Opening Day-2018

With hearth cooking setting the stage, the Ottawa County Historical Society opened its 30th year at the Wolcott Keeper's House on June 2, 2018. OCHS members Ray Machar made hearty soup to welcome our season's first visitors and Karl Kessler provided a house history talk. *(Photos provided by OCHS member Kathy Leonard.)*

Guests from Delaware, Ohio with Ray Machar & Karl Kessler

War of 1812 Artifact

A rare artifact from the War of 1812 will be presented to the Ottawa County Museum at 1 p.m. on Saturday, September 29, 2018, by descendants of the soldier Robert Myers, who took it from an Indian. On his death in 1842, Myers passed it to his son, who continued the tradition. The tomahawk was passed down through the family to the youngest son of each generation. The family owning the tomahawk have selected the Ottawa County Museum as the repository for the tomahawk. The museum will be open to the public from noon to 3 p.m. that day and light refreshments will be served. Admission to the ceremony and the museum are free.

PEGGY DEBIEN

Ribbon Cutting Celebrating
30 Years - 2018

(Left to Right)
Bill Coder, Paul Moon, Patrick O'Keefe

Brothers Ray and Edward Keller transferred ownership of the Wolcott Keeper's House to the Ottawa County Historical Society in November 1989. Flash forward 30 years and one clearly sees the Society has taken tender loving care of the Kelly-built Benajah Wolcott family stone house. On Wednesday, June 6, 2018 OCHS President Patrick O'Keefe cut the ribbon to celebrate not only the past 30 years but help welcome future generations to the recently restored Wolcott Keeper's House.

Holmes Little Giant

Holmes Little Giant
Ottawa Co. Museum

Tractors of that day were tall, cumbersome and had limited maneuverability. George Holmes designed and built a tractor that would solve many of these problems. The driver sat behind the engine so the overall height was only 54 inches. He completed the first tractor in 1911. This was the birth of the Holmes Manufacturing Company in Port Clinton and the Holmes Gasoline Farm Tractor. The price was $1,200. The first tractor was sold to a local farmer. A second tractor was completed a year later. His son, Frederic, took it to Avon, Connecticut where it was sold. A salesman convinced George that the tractor should be mass produced. George gave him the plans, drawings and papers and the salesman disappeared forever and George never received any royalties. This ended the story of the Holmes Little Giant.

Lake Erie's West Sister Island

compiled by Martha A. Dykes, 2018

It is truly a tribute to those among us who have been inspired to bring us books and studies of our region. The most recent of those efforts is Martha Dykes' new book *Lake Erie's West Sister Island*. Who would guess that this little touch of land nine miles off the shore of Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge could be such a rich resource of history and story, beginning with the first French explorers and continuing into its present importance as a national refuge for migratory birds.

Those familiar with Martha's interest in legend and research will find in these 150 pages a wealth of fascinating little stories about how this unpopulated island reflects our local culture.

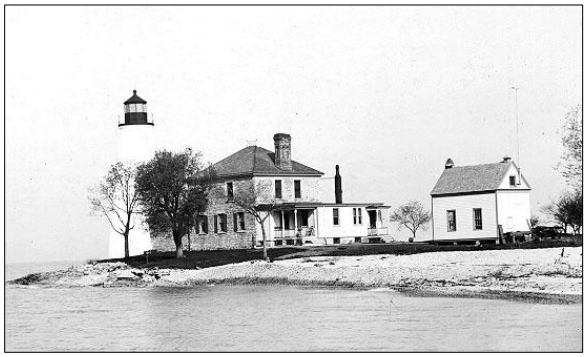
My favorite passages deal with the gorgeous lighthouse, lit for the first time in 1848. The book documents the drama of the lighthouse and its keepers, whose lives were defined by the safety of the travelers of the lake.

Lake Erie's West Sister Island ($10) may be purchased at Green's Drug Store and Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

Also recommended are James Proffitt's study of the Marblehead Lighthouse, 2015, and Richard Norgard's book on the preservation of the Portage River Lighthouse (2017).

Many thanks to our writers for these gifts.

NANCY DUNHAM



West Sister Island Lighthouse - circa 1908
Courtesy Ottawa NWR

Genoa Town Hall Sesquicentennial (150th)
Celebration (June 1-2, 2018)

The Ottawa County Historical Society had a fun-filled time helping Genoa celebrate their 150th birthday June 1 & 2, 2018. There was a host of activities for the whole family to enjoy. We greeted residents in the historic Town Hall both days and listened to folks share their history. With folks having lived their entire lives in Genoa or folks born in Genoa and having moved away or folks having moved to Genoa at some point in their life, it was clear Genoa holds a special spot in everyone's heart. One story, in particular, truly captures why these events are so rewarding. Saturday's day of activities included an antique car show and one outstanding automobile has an incredible historic history----both in Genoa and the Marblehead Peninsula. Bill Otto restores antique cars. Travelling the roads near his farm in Tipp City, he came upon and purchased an old 1921 Model-T Ford truck. During the restoration process, as he removed layers of old paint he began to see lettering which would eventually display "Claus Grocery" in Genoa. Wanting to learn more, Bill wondered whether the store or any members of the Claus family still existed in Genoa. Bill learned from directory assistance there were two listings for "Claus" in Genoa. Calling the first listing, Dwight Claus turned out to be the jackpot. Dwight's grandfather, George Claus, owned and operated the Claus Grocery in Genoa and used a Model-T Ford truck for deliveries. Eventually getting together, Dwight was able to confirm the car Bill had was in fact Dwight's grandfather's delivery truck!

But wait, there's more to the story---the Marblehead Peninsula connection. After hearing Bill's story we were anxious to see the Model-T car and meet Dwight. As Bill showed us the car and introduced us to Dwight, we started talking about the Ottawa County Historical Society. Dwight then truly topped off the evening by indicating he was a descendant of Benajah Wolcott, the first Keeper of the Marblehead Lighthouse. Benajah's family residence is the Wolcott Keeper's House on Bayshore Road which was restored by the Ottawa County Historical Society! So the family genealogy is Benajah and his second wife, Rachel, had a son, Henry. Henry and his third wife, Safronia, had a daughter, Emma. Emma had a daughter, Iva. Iva had a daughter, Marian Jane. Marian Jane had a son, our Genoa's Dwight Claus. Benajah Wolcott is Dwight's great, great, great, grandfather. A perfect ending to a wonderful day. Indeed!

Claus Grocery 1921 Model T Ford Truck - Dwight Claus & Bill Otto

OCHS Lighthouse Festival Civil War Encampment
Saturday, October 13, 2018
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The encampment honors Henry Wolcott, son of Benajah and Rachel. The Ohio 14th Volunteer Infantry will encamp for the occasion.

The Ohio 73rd Volunteer Regimental Band with a 15-piece authentic uniforms and instruments will provide special performances from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. playing Civil War era music.

Ohio State Representative Steven Arndt will do a presentation from the Ohio State Legislature, at 1 p.m., recognizing OCHS's 30 years of association with the Keeper's House.

There will be a fireplace cooking demonstration, docent guided tours, and the gift shop and museum will be open.

The Civil War encampment is less than a month away. It's time count our bean soup and cornbread makers! People wishing to add to the savory mix of soups or to make cornbread should call Kathy Leonard at 419-512-1741 or Becky Shemenski at 419-898-3852. The event is from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please have your soup or cornbread there by 10:00.

Ohio Open Doors

September 7 - 16, 2018

The Ohio History Connection is sponsoring a statewide event where building and landmark operators open their doors to the public for special tours and programs. The purpose is to honor the history, design, and stories of the local area helping to promote, educate and inspire in Ohio's amazing heritage.

The Ottawa County Historical Society has helped to spread the word within the County and 14 organizations and individuals have opened their doors to share the history of the County. All events are free and open to the public. Come and celebrate Ottawa County's wonderful heritage.

Saturday, September 8

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. **OSU Stone Lab Open House**: Gibraltar Island - view Cooke Castle, lectures and laboratory sessions and more. Free transportation to Gibraltar Island Ohio State University's AVC on South Bass Island (last boat to Gibraltar 3:30 p.m.) See details at: go.osu.edu/slopenhouse.

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Lake Erie Islands Historical Society**, 433 Catawba (next to Town Hall; behind Brewery), Put-in-Bay. Tour recently updated museum. New exhibits on the history of Put-in-Bay and the islands.

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Carroll Township Museum, 1880 West Toussaint East Road, Oak Harbor: **Tour and Early Photo Collection Exhibit**. Tour museum and see glass plate collection of Nina Williams, an early postal clerk in the township.

Tuesday, September 11

4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Oak Harbor Public Library, 147 W. Main, Oak Harbor: **Oak Harbor Walking Tour**. Dick Martin & John Liske will guide you through downtown Oak Harbor. Meet at the library's reading area. If inclement weather, a powerpoint program will be provided in the Local History Museum & Center, lower level of the library.

Wednesday, September 12

10 a.m. to 12 noon Catawba Island Historical Society, 5258 E. Porter St, Catawba Island: **History in Union Chapel**, tour Union Chapel, a renovated non-denominational church built in 1888. Exhibit on the history of ice harvesting.

12 noon to 4 p.m. Ottawa County Museum, 126 W. 3rd. St., Port Clinton: **Back to School in History**. Celebrate the beginning of the school year with memorabilia, PCHS Revistas, school senior portraits from the 1930s and 1940s, and discussions with curator and volunteers.

2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Ottawa County Historical Society, 1672 Muddy Creek Rd, Oak Harbor: **Union Center School**. Tour of a one-room schoolhouse historically restored by Norm Witt. Operated from 1899 to 1934.

6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Harris Elmore Public Library: Toledo St., Elmore. **Elmore Manufacturing Co**. history including the Elmore Roadster bicycle and the Elmore Car.

Friday, September 14

10 a.m. to 12 noon Lakeside Heritage Society, Lakeside Chautauqua. **Hoover Auditorium**. Guided tour & exhibit to celebrate Hoover's 90th year.

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Oak Harbor Public Library, 147 W. Main St, Oak Harbor. **Tour the Museum** & what Oak Harbor history materials are on file. Video by Clint Fehlhaber of 1949/50 downtown stores.

2 p.m. to 4 p.m. County Commissioners: **Ottawa County Courthouse**, 315 Madison, Port Clinton. Guided tours of interior and exterior of courthouse.

Saturday September 15

1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Johnson's Island Preservation Society, **Confederate Civil War Prison,** Gaydos Rd, south off Bayshore Rd (Route 163) Marblehead. Guided tour of the Confederate cemetery.

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Ottawa County Historical Society: Wolcott House, 9999 Bayshore Rd., Marblehead. ***Skirmish on the Peninsula***. The first battle of the War of 1812 on Ohio soil.

Sunday September 16

12 noon to 4 p.m. Port Clinton Lighthouse Conservancy. **Port Clinton Lighthouse Tour**. 205 E. Perry St, Port Clinton. Tour the last timber framed pierhead lighthouse on Lake Erie.

OCHS Annual Picnic
August 15 , 2018

Karen O'Keeffe and Carol Lehmann

Roger & Barbara Jensen

Becky Shemenski & Barbara Jensen

Maria Moon & John Williams

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Saturday, September 22, 2018
12:30 p.m.
German Migration to Ohio
Oak Harbor Public Library
147 W. Main, Oak Harbor
Becky Hill, from Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library will speak.
Free to the public
reservations requested to 419-898-7001

Saturday, October 13, 2018
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Lighthouse Festival
Civil War Encampment
at the Keeper's House
The Ohio 14th Volunteer Infantry encampment
Performances by the
Ohio 73rd Volunteer Regimental Band
playing Civil War era music.
Fireplace cooking demonstration
Bean soup, cornbread & cider
Fundraiser drawing at 3 p.m.

Sunday, November 18, 2018
12:30 p.m.
OCHS Fall Membership Meeting
Catawba Island Club
4235 E. Beachclub Road, Port Clinton

Liberty Aviation Museum Events

Sept 22th Fallen 15 Fundraiser & Car Show
Show hours: 4:30pm-9:30pm
Purchase tickets by phone Call: 614-800-8532
Email: info@deploymentcigars.com

Oct 27th Autumn Wine Affair
*****Special event admission required*****

Dec 8th & 9th 6th Annual Holiday Stop & Shop

Dec 16th Santa Breakfast & Santa Fly-In
Breakfast times: 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
Fly-In 11a.m-.1 p.m. The Fly-in is FREE to all who wish to come out and visit Santa & Mrs. Claus!

Dec 31st NYE WWII era
1940s Big Band Hangar Dance
8 p.m.-12:30 a.m.

Elmore Historical Society

Count Krumnow Tombstone Derby
October 28, 2018 - 12 noon to 6 p.m.
Elmore Society Grounds

OTTAWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 385
PORT CLINTON, OH 43452

Non-Profit Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit No. 193
Port Clinton, OH 43452

Inside:

Kettle presented to Keeper's House
From the President's Desk
Spring Cleaning 2018
Keeper's Boathouse Completed
Opening Day 2018
War of 1812 Artifact
Ribbon Cutting Celebration
Holmes Little Giant
Lake Erie's West Sister Island
Genoa Town Hall 150th
OCHS Civil War Encampment
Ohio Open Doors
OCHS Annual Picnic
Mark Your Calendars!

Ottawa County
Historical Society Website:
www.ottawacountyhistory.org

Help Support the Ottawa Co. Historical Society

Online: Using PayPal, you can make a donation directly to the Society by clicking the PayPal button on our new website.

Through purchases you make: When you purchase items through Amazonsmile (Amazon's charity website) or through Kroger supermarket and designate your charity as Ottawa County Historical Society, a portion of your purchase will be donated to the Society.