

From The Friends' Front Porch

Spring 2010

Volume 8, Issue 1

Museum at the Friends Home celebrates ten years of service in 2010

Just over ten years ago, a group of individuals came together in Waynesville to share their passion for the rich heritage of the area and their concerns over its neglect. Out of this meeting of the minds, forty-three charter members formed the Waynesville Heritage and Cultural Center at the Friends Home, Inc (WAHCC). Now operating as the Museum at the Friends Home, the organization has created a vibrant local history museum which is housed in the 1905 Friends boarding home at Fourth and Miami Streets in the Quaker Heritage District of the village. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Museum's founding and it is an appropriate time to look back over the path it has taken to reach this point.

In 1905, the Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), through its local member the Miami Monthly Meeting, opened the Friends Home in Waynesville to offer comfortable housing for its elderly members. The 58-foot wide by 50-foot deep three-story concrete block structure was completed without the current front porch and side covered walkway for a cost of \$10,000. The home welcomed its first resident, Mary Terrell of New Vienna, Ohio, on October 11, 1905. The following month, on November 9, a gala grand opening celebration was held. The event was reported in the local Miami Gazette which noted, "All the visitors seemed more than pleased with the building and the entertainment, and the management of the Home is happy and full of gratitude for the friendly courtesy and substantial interest manifested by the visitors." Lydia A. Conard was hired as matron and Aaron Chandler, who oversaw construction of the building after the first contractor failed in his duties, was hired as superintendent. Early residents were offered a private room, laundry and housekeeping services, and three daily meals, with the added luxuries of indoor plumbing and electric service, for the grand sum of \$3.50 per week.

The Friends Home operated in various guises until 1995. By then, the growing preference for private baths and more modern facilities had transferred many of the residents to the Quaker Community Care Center which opened in 1972 directly behind the original building. The parent organization, Friends Home, Inc. (FHI), used some of the rooms for offices for a short time, but the building was largely unoccupied until the WAHCC leased the structure in 2000. After a period of refurbishing and exhibit collection, the Museum held its grand opening on September 15, 2001.

Volunteers continue to be the mainstay of the Museum. Operating with no paid staff and no regular outside funding, those dedicated individuals who believe in the importance of preserving local history for future generations continue the oft-times thankless job of supporting and maintaining this unique site. In 2006, a 25-year building lease was signed giving the Museum added security but also added responsibilities for the structure. FHI has proven to be a kind landlord, however, and they have donated generously to assist with a necessary furnace upgrade (2006), window repairs (2007 and ongoing), and porch renovation (2008).

The Museum has become a regular stop for bus tour companies which capitalize on history-based tourism in the Warren County area. In conjunction with Harveysburg Historical Society and the Quaker Heritage Center at Wilmington College, the Museum offers a Quaker Heritage Tour which has attracted family reunions and school groups as well as more casual visitors. Ghostly History Walking Tours of Main Street Waynesville and of Quaker Hill, which are offered mainly in October, have become the Museum's biggest fundraiser and help keep the doors open year-round. A popular ladies tea, held each May, continues a tradition started in 2004 and also brings in needed funds.

The Museum takes seriously its mission to "provide a variety of interactive educational opportunities for the public that will make the past come alive and will help people envision the future of their local communities." In 2007, the Museum created *Waynesville Wanderings: A Video Oral History of Waynesville and Vicinity from Early Pioneers through 1970s*, a DVD collection of stories from the community which offers a personal stroll down memory

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***Irish Linen & Lace* tea at Quaker Heights May 15th**

Ladies, dust off your hats and gloves - it's time for tea! The Museum tea party fundraiser will be held Saturday, May 15, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the beautiful Quaker Heights Community Center. Lots of scrumptious delicacies, pots and pots of tea, Celtic music, plus the ever-popular silent auction, make for an afternoon you won't want to miss.

Tables of 10 can be reserved for groups and personally decorated in Irish themes for a light-hearted competition. Individual tickets are also available at \$15 each. Contact Program Chair Linda Morgan at 513.383.0071, or the Museum office at 513.897.1607, and join the fun!

Ghost Tours, Classes Grow in Popularity

The Museum's popular Ghostly History Walking Tours attracted nearly 800 people to Waynesville in 2009. Add in the Hammel House Ghost & Goblet Dinner tours for over 500, and the new Ghost Hunter training classes with our friends at ParaVizionz, and it's easy to see that Board members and volunteer tour guides were very busy in October.

These events play an important role not only in raising funds to keep the Museum doors open, but in getting new visitors through those doors. Tour guests are invited back to the Museum for refreshments after each outing, and guests are always amazed at the treasures they find. "I didn't even know the Museum was here!" is heard far too often, but many of those tour guests come back for later visits, and bring friends.

Call early (513.897.1607) to reserve your hauntingly good time!



Volunteers are always needed to help with copying, tagging artifacts, cleaning, tours, and for special projects. Come join us! Our work is interesting and we have a great time. Call 513.897.1607 whether you have a few days or a few hours to share. You are most welcome!

Tenth Anniversary Celebration held March 20th

A volunteer appreciation reception was held Saturday, March 20th, at the Rick and Sue Rieger family's *Labarn* just north of Waynesville. More than fifty Museum members, volunteers and guests gathered to celebrate their efforts in historic preservation.



Jeff Hecht provided delightful background music while displaying the beautiful sounds of the unique two-story pipe organ which is housed in the massive workshop-cum-party barn. The day left everyone reenergized to face the challenges of the next decade.



Fire & Police Museum Planned for Old Lock-up

A joint venture is bringing together the historic preservation knowledge of the Museum with the stories of people who have served Waynesville through the years in the police and fire departments. Plans are underway to convert the Old Lock-up at 290 Chapman Street to a local police and fire museum. Watch for more details in the coming months as the project takes shape.

Curator's Corner

~ by *Dolly McKeenan*

What better way to celebrate the Museum's tenth anniversary but with a homecoming? The first of our two new spring exhibits is the "O'Neill Family Homecoming." This wonderful collection of ladies Quaker clothing from Margie Eubanks on behalf of the O'Neill family in Florida. Abijah O'Neill was one of the first Quakers who migrated here from South Carolina in 1799 and O'Neill Road is named after this family. On display will be Quaker clothing from the late 1880s with beautiful hand-made dresses - some elaborate frocks and some simple everyday dresses - and nightclothes, plus an assortment of family quilts. We can't thank the O'Neill family enough for bringing this portion of our local history home again.

A second homecoming exhibit, titled "The Harris Pearls Come Home" is the Israel Hopkins Harris collection of 1878 fresh water pearls from the Little Miami River. In 1889, Mr. Harris donated a large portion of his collection to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Our small sample was originally housed at the Old Lock-Up on Chapman Street, but will now be on display in the Waynesville Room of the Museum. Virginia (Ginny) Haley, great-grand daughter of Mr. Harris, has permitted the pearls to be transferred to the Museum so that it can be enjoyed by all. Also included in this exhibit is a large framed photo of Israel Harris. A sample of this collection of fresh water pearls is on display at McDonald's in a lobby cabinet. As with the O'Neill donation, we are very thankful that Ginny has brought her family's collection of pearls to the museum.

It is amazing to realize that the Museum is celebrating its first decade. We hope everyone realizes what a jewel our community has within these walls. So much history, so many family names, so many changes. I can only say that the people who volunteer, either as a board member, tour guide, host/hostess, cookie crew or in other ways, have a passion for what we do here. Without the help of volunteers and members who support the Museum through dues and donations, your Museum would be just a dream. Thank you to everyone who supports our efforts.

Finally, we hope you will think of the Museum if your family, church or civic group is looking for an interesting outing. Our guided tours offer a great way to spend a few hours with friends. Reservations can be made by calling the Museum office at 513.897.1607. Hours remain 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Wednesday and Saturday, and by appointment. As always, please feel free to call me if you have any questions or comments on the Museum.

Ten Years...continued:

lane. And in 2009, as a charter member of the local Heritage Advisory Council, the Museum joined in the publication of *Historic Warren County: An Illustrated History*, the first written county-wide history to be published since the renowned Beers & Co. effort, *The History of Warren County, Ohio*, in 1882.

The original core of volunteers who worked so diligently to raise funds and acquire donations for exhibits in the Museum at the Friends Home is justifiably proud of its accomplishments. The names of all those who have contributed time, energy, money and artifacts over the years are not included in this anniversary review; inevitably, someone would be missed, and none of the loyal supporters should ever be slighted. Each person has made a vital contribution to bring the Museum to the admirable status it holds today.

The facility has grown to include nineteen exhibit rooms of fascinating local history. Each boarder room is now dedicated to a slice of the past, preserving the memories of small towns

which are fading from existence including Corwin, Oregonia, Lytle, and the now-submerged New Burlington. Laundry and canning facilities, a schoolroom, a doctor's office, a children's area, and a time-warping trip to the 1950s round out this wonderful collection of memories. The Quaker community is highlighted as well, and the featured 2010 exhibit welcomes home a unique collection of clothing belonging to the Abijah O'Neill family. O'Neill was one of the first Quakers who migrated from Bush River, South Carolina, to what is now Waynesville in 1799.

As the Museum at the Friends Home enters its tenth year of operation, the hard-working Board of Trustees, loyal volunteers and members share a unique bond that, while housed within the walls of the 1905 Friends Home, encompasses the soul of the community at large. The struggle for sufficiency and recognized relevance continues, but the results are precious and timeless. *Come home to the Friends Home!*



If Walls Could Talk

~ by *Mary Bunker*

The Museum and the Waynesville Historic Preservation Board have partnered to update the Self-guided Walking Tour of Historic Waynesville brochure. This is being funded jointly by MFH, the Waynesville Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau. This exciting project has many future possibilities.

Beginning in April, volunteers will visit each residence/building to present the property owner with historical information on the property. This material comes from several sources: inventories that were compiled in the 1990s which were used to qualify Main Street for the National Register of Historic Places, and the historical posters made for downtown in 2009 which contain histories and old photos of the properties. The packet will also include details on tax breaks and potential grants, and a questionnaire in hopes that the owner will

share personal history of their property.

After the survey is completed, a new walking tour brochure will be developed. The data will also be entered into a database designed by MFH Trustee Rick Rieger. Plans are to make this information available through the Museum's website.

We have two long range goals: one, to gain accurate histories of all 230 historic structures that have been recognized by the Ohio Historical Society as being significant; and two, to gather accurate, concrete information on possible safe havens used on the Underground Railroad.

If you are interested in joining either the brochure Historic Home Committee or our Underground Railroad Committee, please contact Mary Bunker at 513.897.7677, or the Museum at 513.897.1607.

Become a friend of

The Museum at the Friends Home

P.O. Box 12, Waynesville, OH 45068

Membership Opportunities

- Student ~ \$10/year Individual ~ \$25/year
- Family ~ \$35/year Corporate ~ \$100/year

Additional donation: \$ _____ (circle one) general fund ~ windows ~ other: _____

Memorial in honor of: _____

Please make checks payable to WAHCC (Waynesville Area Heritage & Cultural Center)

The Museum is dedicated to preserving all aspects of the history and culture of Waynesville, Wayne Township, Massie Township, and other surrounding areas in Warren County. The WAHCC at the Museum at the Friends Home also offers a monthly book discussion group and special exhibits, and is always looking for volunteers. If you would be interested in any of these opportunities, please feel free to call the Museum at 513.897.1607 for more information.

You are most welcome!

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Charter Life Members do not pay annual dues, but donations are always appreciated, or the membership may be converted to annual in order to provide regular support for the Museum.

Yes! I would like to volunteer in the following areas:

- copying mailings research archiving cleaning
- phone calls yard work painting tours
- other: _____

Book Club Lecture May 4th

The Whittier Literary Society is sponsoring a lecture titled "Framer's Intent and Current Constitutional Issues." The meeting will be held at the Museum on Tuesday, May 4, at 7 p.m. Scheduled speakers are attorneys Jennifer and Catherine Sooy.

The Sooy's teach Constitutional Law at Sinclair College and have been praised for their interesting approach in presenting this subject. They will describe the historical motivation for the Constitution, emphasizing the Bill of Rights, and will also discuss the impact of this document on recent Supreme Court decisions regarding Congress' power to raise taxes, regulate interstate commerce, implied powers, and the issue of federalism (states rights versus federal government authority). The lecture will last one hour, followed by questions and refreshments.

The John Greenleaf Whittier Literary Society meets at the Museum once a month at 7 p.m. This small, friendly, highly-interactive group reads an eclectic mix of member-selected books ranging from the classics to those recently published. Each title must be well-written, have worthwhile content and present a point-of-view that promotes interesting group discussion.

Over the years members have stated that as a result of the varied nature of the books read, they have been introduced to many wonderful new authors. For more information on this special lecture or the regular book club gatherings, contact Linda Morgan at 513.383.0071 or RLmorgan819@hughes.net

Noteworthy Notes

- The Museum has joined the Internet age! Donations, tour fees and membership can be paid to the Museum online via PayPal. Visit www.friendshomemuseum.org and follow the appropriate links to make your payment quickly and easily.
- Interested in saving postage and trees by receiving our newsletter via email? Let us know: info@friendshomemuseum.org. Or, if you'd rather not receive our mailings any longer, let us know that as well (via mail, phone or email) and we will update our mailing list. We never want to be a bother! Thank you for your consideration.

Dulcimer Friends Add Free Lessons to Calendar

The Dulcimer Friends of Caesars Creek now offer free lap dulcimer lessons on the third Tuesday of each month with instruments on loan. The group meets regularly for practice sessions at the Museum from 7-9 p.m. each second and fourth Tuesday. Mountain (lap) and hammer dulcimer, penny whistle, banjo, Bohdran – all old-time instruments, and any skill level, are welcome to join in the fun.

Visit the website at www.dulcimerfriends.org or call 937.542.1903 for more information.



~ Volunteers ~ The Backbone of Your Museum

The 12-member Museum Board of Trustees has a number of standing committees working hard to keep things humming. According to our bylaws, the clerk (chair) of each committee is a Board member, and the committee is staffed with additional volunteers. Which group could use your expertise? Give us a call!

- Executive: Milton Cook, clerk, with Bill Stubbs, Dolly McKeegan and Chad Bridgman
- Financial: Bill Stubbs, clerk, with Milton Cook, Eula McDermott and Bill Jones
- Professional Concerns: Cyndi Pauwels, clerk, volunteers needed
- Membership/Trusteeship: Dolly McKeegan, clerk, with Janet Jones and Lee Philpott
- Collection/Acquisition: Dolly McKeegan, clerk, with Samantha McKeegan and Lee Philpott
- Programs: Linda Morgan, clerk, with Dot Fosnaugh and Eula McDermott
- Publicity: Cyndi Pauwels, clerk, with Chuck Feicht
- Grants: Bill Jones, clerk, with Chuck Feicht and Cyndi Pauwels
- Grounds/Building: Chad Bridgman, clerk, with Bill Stubbs and Larry McKeegan
- Volunteers: Samantha McKeegan, clerk, with Ashley Bridgman

MFH

Museum at the Friends Home
Fourth & Miami Streets
P.O. Box 12
Waynesville, OH 45068



Mark your calendar!

~ All events are held at the Museum unless otherwise noted ~

March

- 4: Museum Board of Trustees meeting ~ 7 p.m.
- 20: Tenth Anniversary Celebration & Season Kick-off ~ 3-5 p.m. at LaBarn
- 27: OAHSM Region 8 Meeting ~ 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Quaker Heritage Ctr., Wilmington

April

- 1: Museum Board of Trustees meeting ~ 7 p.m.
- 10: Season opening ~ regular hours Wednesday, Saturday & Sunday ~ 1-4 p.m.

May

- 4: Book club lecture: "Framer's Intent & Current Constitutional Issues" ~ 7 p.m.
- 6: Museum Board of Trustees meeting ~ 7 p.m.
- 15: *Irish Linen & Lace* tea party ~ Quaker Heights Community Care Center ~ 1-3 p.m.

June

- 3: Museum Board of Trustees meeting ~ 7 p.m.

July

- 1: Museum Board of Trustees meeting ~ 7 p.m.

~ Visit us on the web: www.friendshomemuseum.org ~

info@friendshomemuseum.org