

Shaving Permits 1984

In the last newsletter, I wrote about the beard-growing contest. Recently some one donated the “Shaving Permit” badge for our collection. As you remember, during the 150th anniversary of Niles, Ohio in 1984 the beard-growing contest was quite popular and all done in fun. The appointed Keystone Cops were to arrest anyone with a clean-shaven face and they took their job very seriously.

If you didn't want to grow a beard then you had to buy a special permit. These were available at the Niles City Building and the Niles Times office for \$1.00. It was important to wear it at all times, you could be arrested with out a permit, and then you would be placed in the Keystone Cops Jail and be fined 25 cents. Individuals could not pay their own fine, they had to call a friend to bail you out with the 25 cents, and that friend had better have his shaving permit pinned on, or he'd be put in jail too. They had all sorts of funny looking beards grown.



Frank Montagna, Bill Spowart, Jim Murray, and Jack Hockensmith won the beard-growing contest, and each received a \$25.00 prize.

150th Year.... Birthday

Since the Ward-Thomas Museum was built 150 years ago in 1862, we decided to have a cake to celebrate that special year. There are very few homes in Niles still standing that were built in 1862. Certainly there are none with the gingerbread detailing on the outside, as our museum. Inside the museum one can only stand in utter amazement looking up at the beautiful “one of a kind” plaster moldings around the ceilings. These were made from a hand carved wooden

mold, years ago. When the plaster was hardened the workmen would open the mold and place the hardened plaster up at the ceiling and there they have endured the test of time. The house is a real special treasure and has been beautifully preserved through the years by the families that have lived here.

Robert Macali generously donated the birthday cake from his family's “Giant Eagle” Store. It was decorated with a picture of the museum on it and with red and blue rosebuds on each piece. It was placed in the Westenfield Room for all to see, then at 2:30 we all sang “Happy Birthday” as Mayor Ralph Infante cut the cake and Ruth Van Huffel served the cake to all our guests.

The Society has been richly blessed to have a home such as this to shape into a museum for its citizens to enjoy visiting and are proud of. Preserving history for future generation is both a challenge and a joy that the society members take very seriously.



Heritage Day, August 5, 2012

We sincerely thank all the people who worked so hard to present the “Heritage Day” event this year. As you know, for any outdoor event, it's hard to plan on a date that the weather will be just perfect. After all the hot, dry days we had this summer, we had a definite change in temperature. Sunday proved to be a misty, slight drizzly day, just enough to make it uncomfortable if you were outside for any length of time. I am sure the weather did a lot to keep people away this year, but it was still interesting to look over the roster of people who signed the book when they toured the museum. We had about half the people sign in from Niles and the rest were from towns up north around Cortland and as far south to Lisbon, Ohio and all the area in between. It was also rather interesting to note there were five out of state visitors here too. We are proud to bring tourism into the area. We have received some very nice compliments about the museum and the grounds and we are forever thankful to our volunteers and society workers.

Of course there is the daily work to be done in the museum and around the property, but when the focus turns to preparing for “Heritage Day” it requires the help of many more volunteers. We were blessed with many willing hands. Dave Martin repaired some small cracks in the cement near the greenhouse walkway and Ruth Van Huffel did some touch-up painting in the inside of the garden house. George John and Nancy Malone cleaned the kitchen area. Sandy Bilovesky sat up the Indian display up in the barn and Audrey John tidied up in the Museum while Pat Burgess-Fisher and Frank Burke policed the grounds for debris.

For those special people, who set up their displays and shared their information with the public we say “Thanks” again: Barbara James, Carol and Doug Babyak, Hugh Mullen, Ralph and Colette Chuey, Rick Muccio and June Karovic all had interesting displays that everyone enjoyed seeing.

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Niles Historical Society
P. O. Box 368
Niles, Ohio 44446

Non-profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
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Permit #337

Visit our Website: www.nileshistoricalsociety.org
and check out the Photos and Stories links.

Monthly Calendar	
<p>Public Open House The first Sunday of each month 2-5 p.m.</p> <p>Private tours may be scheduled by calling: The office 330.544.2143</p> <p>Membership meetings – 10:00am The first Saturday each month Executive meeting – 9:30am prior to membership meeting.</p>	<p>Trustees: Fremont Camerino, Jesse Scott, Roselyn Watson</p> <p>Officers: Betty Whitney.....President Nancy Malone Vice-President Letha Pihonsky.....Recording Secretary Ruth Van Huffel.....Corresponding Secretary Pat Burgess-Fisher.....Treasurer Frank Burke Assistant Treasurer</p> <p>Anne Townley Program Editor Chairman Audrey John Research Editor Nancy Malone Education Editor Ralph Tolbert.....Technology Editor</p>

Trees At The Museum

One of the joys of seeing the seasons pass here in Ohio is the beautiful changes in nature. The variety of trees on the museum grounds, give us an opportunity to see the best of nature. For instance we rarely notice the tiny little seed buds on the trees, as they get ready for winter.

The Kousa dogwood tree has majestic flowers in the spring that are four white petals and in late summer, we see small red balls of seeds getting ready to drop to the ground and



start new seedlings for the springtime. This tree was planted in honor of *Helen Crofford*, past President of the Historical Society and is located east of the Westenfield Building on the museum property.



The same with the Red Bud tree. In the spring the dainty pink flowers pop up on the black branches, later the heart shaped leaves appears. In the fall, it's seedpods looks like the string beans hanging from its branches.



You are always welcome to walk the grounds and see the beauty of nature we have at the museum. The grounds were cared for years ago by Mrs. Waddell's gardener and with his knowledge and loving care we are able to enjoy the property today. One day, *Mark Wilthew*, Service Forester from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources visited. He remarked about the beauty of the grounds and that some of the coniferous trees here are not native to the northeastern Ohio. When you visit, you will see a variety of trees that have been planted here years ago for their beauty and diversity of specimens, making the grounds a true historical gem.

Piper Drugstore

While going through the old newspapers we ran across a special edition, dated May 18, 1926. It was called "Piper's Edition" because all it contained was information on the drug store at 20 Main Street in Niles. Owner, *F. P. Piper* was celebrating his 7th year in the drugstore and he proclaimed he had over 25,000 items in the 30 departments of the store.

The advertising edition states that Mr. F. P. Piper regarded Niles as his home for nearly 25 years. He was a graduate of Valparaiso University, Department of Pharmacy, and then he worked for several drug stores in the area. Then in 1919 he leased the Thomas Racket store, enlarging the store several times. He believed advertising was important to any business and had ads run in every edition of the Niles Times.

He was proud of his staff of employees and credits them in a large part with the popularity of his store. *Harry Montgomery*, assistant pharmacist, graduated from Ohio State University, Department of Pharmacy. *Ethel Wolfburg* was in charge of the greeting cards and gift items and has worked there 6 years. *Bernard Lally*, the red headed soda squirt has aspirations of being a pharmacist. *Helen Young* helps out at the soda fountain. *Sam Woodcock*, a local boy, worked in Pipers store for two years, but now is at Ohio Northern University trying hard to become a pharmacist. *John Krasnopera* is the janitor and prides himself in the clean windows.

Some of our readers may remember the soda fountain in



the store. According to the article, it was the most up to date sanitary soda fountain available, electrically refrigerated with a one-half horsepower Frigidaire machine, assuring that ice cream, syrups and drinks of all kinds were at a constant temperature. Mr. Piper was the first person in Ohio to install a Deluxe Liquid Carbonic Soda Fountain in his store.

The newspaper story was interesting and so was the picture in the newspaper. We have very few views of inside the stores that once lined the Main Street in Niles. This picture shows the soda fountain along the left side with stools for the customers.

Frank B. Piper and his wife *Sarah* had a daughter, *Jayne* who was an active member of the Niles Historical Society years ago and a son *Keith*, who was a football coach at Dennison University. In 1997 the football stadium was named **Piper Stadium** in honor of his career at Dennison.

Presidential Candidate, Jack Kennedy, Visits Niles, Ohio on October 15, 1960



Enthusiastic Nilesites lined Robbins Avenue and Main Street hoping to catch a glimpse of JFK as the motorcade progressed past the crowded throng.



Merle Fick (on bicycle seat) and an unidentified friend display their Kennedy posters as they pose for a picture where Haydu's gas station now stands.

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The day of the event requires the dedication of many and our docents are always on the job ready to show visitors through the museum and tell its history throughout. *Jessie Scott*, *Thelma Snyder*, *Dot Leo*, *Shirley Harris*, *Roselyn Watson*, *Garnet Smith*, *Letha Pihonsky*, *Audra Dull*, *Marilyn DeCesare*, *Georgia Mae Jones*, *Donna Nellis*, and *Helen DeMalio*, helped as docents. Tickets were sold by *Bill* and *Mary Alice Neiss* and *Bob* and *Gerrie Miller* while *Fremont Camerino* directed cars to the parking area. *Carol Souders* and *Nancy Malone* were in the garden room cooking delicious hotdogs while *Joyce Mahan* and *Lynn Gombos* were creating those famous lemon shakes in the gazebo. *Sofia Froom* handled the bake sale and also sold books on the back porch of the museum. The birthday cake was served by *Ruth Van Huffel*.

Preserving Articles In The Newspapers.

For the past year, *Pat Pfeifer* has been working on the files at the museum. One project that requires action is to take all the newspaper articles out of the files, copy them on the copy machine, then replace the information into the files, discarding the actual newspaper. Through the years we have been collecting stories about the people and events in Niles but it was usually just a clipping from the newspaper placed in the file.

Newspaper can not be saved forever because the acid content is high and before you know it the paper has turned dark brown and becomes very fragile and in time just crumbles in your hands. The oldest newspaper we had donated to us, years ago, was part of an extra from the Niles Daily News, October 16, 1918. Headlines were **“Huns will accept terms providing German peoples interest are safeguarded by Wilson.”** To preserve anything as fragile as this, the only option is to take a picture of it, for even placing it on the copy machine will cause great harm.



The Piper Drugstore pictures in this newsletter were from an old 1926 newspaper and that is the reason they are not as sharp as a glossy photo print would be. Remember the newspaper pictures can be copied on a copy machine; if you have access to a copy machine that has an adjustment setting, you may be able to produce a fairly clear picture. You might then scan the copy, creating a digital picture and then move it into a computer program such as *Adobe Photoshop** for more touch ups. There is a limit, however, as to what you can do to create a clear picture from the newspaper.

We will continue to go through the copies of the old newspapers and save what articles we can along with the pictures. We would prefer to have glossy photos donated to us, so this is once again a reminder to let us scan any pictures in your files that you think we need for our files. I remember the box of pictures that the Niles Times had on their counter as you went into the office. Everyone was free to take any picture they wanted. Then came along the digital pictures and there were no more copies to be had.

Our thanks to Pat for working on this much-needed project. Because of the vast amount of information in the files, we have had to re-arrange the location of some of the files. We look forward to the day our files will all be in one place in the new building so that research can be more easily accomplished. (*Adobe PhotoShop is the premiere image editing program, however free software such as Picasa work satisfactorily. Ed.)



Saw Horses By George...

I never thought I would be writing an article for the Historical Society newsletter or I would have taken better notes. Anyway the subject of this story is “Saw Horses” which I have been building and using for many years. Let us travel back to the 1950’s and during this time, I was working in the trades as a carpenter. I was involved in the Carpenters Apprentice Program as an assistant to *Ben Ferguson* the instructor for the program.

Ben was also the shop foreman for the Gibson Construction, a prominent contractor in Warren, Ohio at that time. Ben Ferguson was an ideal teacher. Ben knew his subject and was able to explain the problem so the students could understand. Our apprentice class would meet in the woodworking shop of Warren Harding High School. To further explain the advances in construction, Ben invited the class to visit his shop which was located a block south of West Market Street in the vicinity of Peerless Electric. Not many apprenticeship programs had such information available to them as this.

Ben had specific plans for his lightweight saw horses. He even provided a nailing guide for each connection. Ben Ferguson was a very devoted person, willing to assist the Carpenters Apprenticeship Program. Ben’s saw horse is 2’ high x 4’ long. Plans are available from me to those who would want to build their own sawhorse.

Sawhorses are used in construction by carpenters to act both as a worktable and as a vise to hold boards in a workable position so the boards can be sawed, drilled and nailed. Sawhorses are very important when working with long heavy boards. Two sawhorses and a 5/8” x 4’ x 8’ sheet of plywood can provide a large table on which to work. Two or more sawhorses and a long sturdy plank can serve as a temporary scaffold on which to stand and reach higher levels.

The advantage in using sawhorses is that they are lightweight, very adaptable and can be easily transported from one job station to another. A pair of sturdy sawhorses is a positive addition to any construction project. I have been working with sawhorses for over 60 years and have never had one collapse due to the weight imposed upon it.

I have made a pair of good sturdy sawhorses for the Society’s use at the museum. — *George John*