

Southwest PIONEER

DECEMBER 2016

grovecityhistory@gmail.com

Southwest Franklin County Historical Society
3378-B Park St., Grove City, OH 43123

Second Railroad Line Once Planned For City

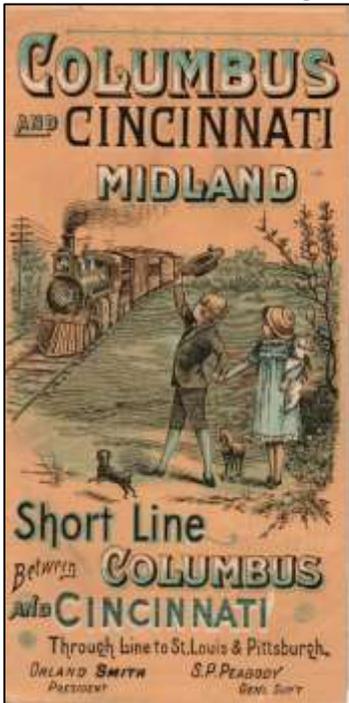
The Columbus, Cincinnati and Midland Railroad wasn't the only railroad that planned a line to Columbus through Grove City.

The late Roland L. (Lum) Edwards, city administrator in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the George Haughn administration, uncovered evidence that a second railroad company, the Ohio Southern Railroad, started a branch line to Columbus from Jeffersonville sometime after 1881. The company also started a line to Cincinnati and on to Midway (Sedalia).

Railroad bed work progressed north to Grove City and ended in the area between Birch Bark Trail and Stargrass Avenue. Mike Boso, Grove City's chief building inspector, saw an area that was built up and was told by a resident that the work was done by a railroad company many years ago.

Financial difficulties prevented track from ever being laid in southern Franklin County.

Ohio Southern had extended its mainline from Springfield to Lima in 1892 and that caused a financial strain that forced it into receivership in 1895. *See Page 3*



Last Day, First Day. *The Columbus Celina Bus Company provided transportation to and from Columbus for years until the early 1970s. These pictures were taken on the last day of service by Columbus Celina. The Lincoln Village Transit Company took over the Grove City-Columbus route and operated for several years.*

Harrisburg Was Once Home To Three Hotels

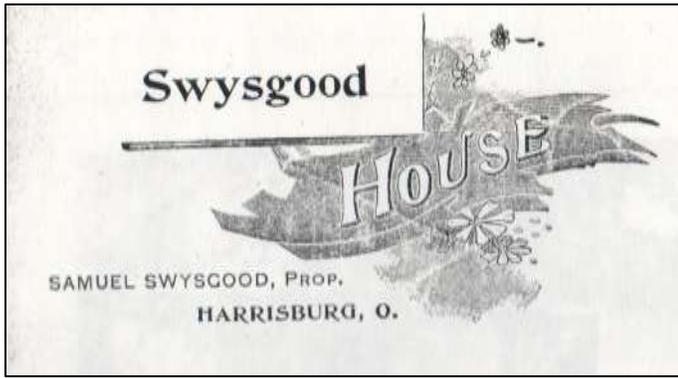
Most people have heard of the National House that once stood on Columbus Street in Harrisburg and the United States Hotel at High and Columbus streets but was there a third?

Samuel Swysgood, born in 1826 and died in 1900, was also a hotel operator in the village. Swysgood first served the community as a village marshal in 1854 and by 1880 he was listed in a federal census as a Harrisburg saloon keeper.



Samuel Swysgood

It was probably about that time he and his wife, Mary Ellen, opened their home to boarders offering both food and lodging. Their business became known as the Swysgood House or the Swysgood House Hotel. Joyce Wood of San Jose, CA, provided a copy of an envelope return address that referred to the boarding house as Swysgood House. *See Page 2*



Harrisburg's Swysgood House

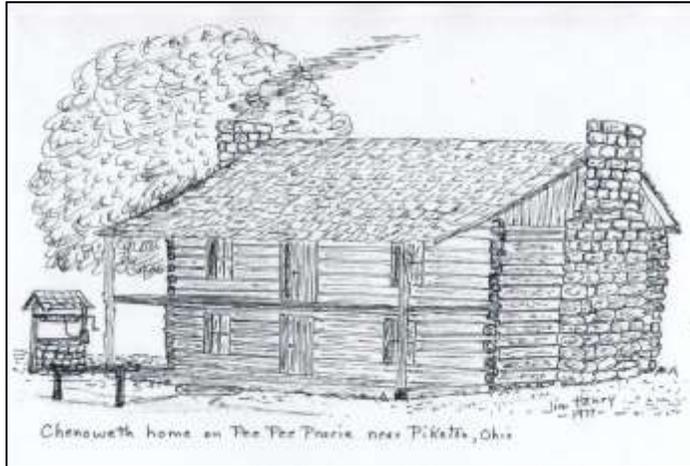
Continued from Page 1

There is no indication as to where Samuel's saloon was located. The Swysgood House was located on Lot 3 in Harrisburg.

Samuel's daughter, Mary Ellen, graduated from Harrisburg High School in 1897, one of five graduates that year. She was selected to deliver the class commencement speech.

After high school, she managed the hotel and later married Edward Thomas Wood, a man 14 years her senior.

They continued to live in the Swysgood House where they raised a family of four children while still taking in borders.



This is a sketch of the Elijah and Rachel Chenoweth home on the Pee Pee Prairie in Pike County. It originally appeared in The Pike County News-Watchman in June 1977. It is reprinted with permission from Jim Henry, Pike County historian and artist.

More Information Available On Chenoweth Settlements

The Chenoweth family that settled the Harrisburg area moved to Central Ohio after relocating for a time in Pike County. They came from Maryland and Western Virginia. There are some gaps in the history that hopefully can be answered in time.

John Chenoweth, son of Elijah and Rachel, became the first white child born in Pike County in 1797. He was the son of Elijah, 37, and Rachel Foster Chenoweth.

They were early settlers in Kentucky and natives of Maryland who moved to Pike County in 1795.



Elijah
Chenoweth

The Chenoweth home was located between Piketon and Waverly on the Pee Pee Prairie. The log structure stood on the same property until the Ohio Department of Transportation straightened US Rt. 23 in 1940. That was the year the log house in Pike County was dismantled.

Four years after the Chenoweth family arrived in Pike County, the couple and two sons moved, in 1799, to what is now the Pleasant Township area of Franklin County. Elijah was 37 years old when he moved his young family north.

Their home was a log cabin about a half mile north of the village on the road to Darbydale. The house was located in a low area and was constructed in 1806. It eventually evolved into a 14-room home and the first religious services in the area were held in their home.

Elijah and Rachel's children included Thomas and John, born before the move to Pleasant Township; Joseph, Rachel, Cassandra, Elizabeth and Elijah Chenoweth, all born in Franklin County.

Thirty-seven years after Elijah and Rachel moved to Pleasant Township, a son, Joseph Chenoweth and Frederick Cole created a plat in 1836 for the village of Harrisburgh. The "h" was removed from the village name in 1893 thus creating the Village of Harrisburg. The settlement was initially known at the time as Darby Cross Roads. Other documents referred to the community as Mudsock.

Joseph married Margaret Heath of Pickaway County and they had nine children including Rachel, Jane, Elijah, Joseph, Sarah, William, Elizabeth, Isabella, and Jerry.

Margaret's husband had become a wealthy businessman who frequently traveled in a wagon to Baltimore where he purchased goods that were in high demand in Franklin, Pickaway and Ross Counties.

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A close examination of the map above shows the route of the Columbus and Cincinnati Midland Railroad from Columbus. Trains passed through Grove City with stops at Palestine, Mt. Sterling, White Oak, Bloomingburg, Washington Court House, Sabina, Reesville, Wilmington, Marlow, Clinton Valley, Loveland and Madison Village before a stop in Cincinnati. According to the CCM passenger schedule, the train also stopped at Greenlawn Cemetery, Briggsdale, Pleasant Corners, Morgan and Derby.

Railroad Traffic Through Grove City In The Late 1800s

Continued from Page 1

Ohio Southern eventually was absorbed by the Detroit, Toledo and Ironton Railway (DT&I).

It's entirely possible the Ohio Southern could have been the first rail line through Grove City because the town learned in 1882 that another rail line would pass through the town.

A rail construction gang working for the Columbus, Cincinnati and Midland Railroad reached Grove City in March 1884. Later that year, trains rolled through Grove City shipping cattle, hogs, grain and lumber.

Little is known about the Ohio Southern company today.

A document purchased by Steve Jackson, president of the Society, provided much information about the old CCM Midland route through Grove City.

Anyone with additional information about Ohio Southern Railway and the Columbus, Cincinnati Midland line would be appreciated. Readers are encouraged to email that information to grovecityhistory@gmail.com.



The Jackson Township Library in Grove City moved into the second floor of the Rolla White building in the Town Center in 1936.

80 Years Ago Library Moved To New Site

In the fall of 1936, the predecessor of the Grove City Library moved into new quarters on the second floor of the Rolla White Building, above what is now Grandstand Pizza.

At that time, the local library was operated and identified as the Jackson Township Library, not the Grove City Library.

The new space measured 48 feet by 33 feet nine inches with hard maple floors. Mr. White agreed to assist the library board by providing electricity and heat.

A newspaper article in the Grove City Record told patrons the new library would be four times larger with a reading section, modern displays of magazines and hundreds of new books.

The library officially opened to the public Nov. 14, 1936, eighty years ago.

On Oct. 16, 2016 the new Grove City Library, part of the Southwest Public Libraries, opened to the public at the corner of Broadway and Columbus Street.

The new building covers 48,000 square feet and is designed to move the library forward into the 21st Century.

The Oral History Project of the Grove City Historical Commission will be housed in the library for public research.

More than 30 interviews have been completed at this point and library patrons can either listen to a digital recording or read a transcript of the actual conversation at the library.

More Information Available On Chenoweth Settlements

Continued from Page 2

He also ran a trade route between Chillicothe and Franklinton.

Joseph also bought and sold large numbers of livestock, according to the *History of Franklin and Pickaway Counties*. His land holdings totaled 1,600 acres.

Chenoweth was described in the history as having an immense circle of friends and was supportive in establishing a Methodist Episcopal Church in the village although he was never affiliated with any religious organization. He also served two terms in the Ohio House of Representatives as a member of the Whig Party. He later became a Republican.

There are Chenoweth Cemeteries in both Pike County and near Harrisburg.

Civil War Veterans Met At Beulah Park

Before Beulah Park was known for thoroughbred racing, it was a community park where the Civil War era veterans of the Ohio Volunteer Infantry held a reunion 116 years ago.

A story in *the Grove City Record* Oct. 7, 1965, recorded an account of that event.

A commemorative booklet, found by Elvin Weygandt over 50 years ago, detailed the 27th annual reunion 75 veterans attended. According to Steve Jackson, it is likely this group represented the 113th Regiment. Company C organized heavily from Grove City; Company G from Mount Sterling and other companies were formed in Circleville and London.

This group had seen bloody fighting at battles including Chickamauga in Tennessee and Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia.

Most of the veterans came from throughout Ohio but a few traveled from as far away as Kansas. The old veterans traded stories and shared memories.

Elvin's grandfather, Daniel Weygandt, an Ohio Volunteer Infantry veteran, is believed to have taken part in General Sherman's famous "March to the Sea" in the Civil War.

Renew Memberships This Month

News Briefs

Help Needed At Village

Society members are encouraged to help get Century Village ready for the holiday season on Friday, Dec. 2 at 1 p.m. The task will be decorating buildings and cutting evergreens. On Monday, Dec. 12, 1 p.m., volunteers will again be needed to help remove the decorations at Century Village.

Election Held

Steve Jackson was re-elected president of the Society at the October meeting and Paul Crissinger was re-elected vice president. Officers are elected for a two year term. The president and vice president are elected at one cycle and the secretary and treasurer at another time.

Photographs Donated

Keith Stenerson has donated three sets of photographs to the Society. He took the pictures at the Grant Homestead. The pictures were taken inside and outside the main house and all of the buildings on the property before any renovation was started.

Web Site Schedule

The Society's web site should be active after the first of the year. Jeffrey Tadlock of Windora Design has been working closely with the Society committee that includes Steve Jackson, Mike Esposito, Mark Schmidbauer and Jim Hale.

New Museum Employee

Rita Traphagan has been hired by Grove City Parks and Recreation at the museum. She will work Mondays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Tuesdays from 4-8 p.m.

Price Hike to Mailing Newsletters

Effective for 2017, the cost to mail quarterly newsletters has been increased from \$7 to \$9. The increase covers the basic costs for printing, mailing and postage. The action was approved at the November meeting.

Standards Considered for Village

Schooly Caldwell, the firm in charge of renovation for the Grant homestead, has been approached by Grove City Parks and Recreation to make a study to appropriately date Century Village. This project is planned for 2017. The effort is designed to insure that the character of Century Village is maintained for future generations to enjoy.



Christmas Party Is Dec. 6 At St. John's Lutheran

The Society's annual Christmas party is planned for the monthly meeting on Dec. 6 at 6:30 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church. Chicken will be furnished by the Society.

Members attending should bring their own table service, beverage and a covered dish to share with others.

Two Trolleys Planned For Holiday Celebration

The Grove City Historical Commission will again sponsor two Christmas trolleys that will run between the Welcome Center and Museum, 3378 Park St., and Century Village, 3899 Orders Rd., Saturday, Dec. 10.

Both facilities are decorated for the holiday season. There is no admission and the trolley rides are free.

According to Steve Jackson, "This is a great opportunity to introduce the community to both facilities so spread the word to friends and neighbors". Museum decorations will be in place after Thanksgiving through the first week in January 2017.

OTHER HOLIDAY EVENTS

Saturday, Dec. 3, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Christmas Celebration and Parade in the Grove City Town Center. Entertainment, Santa and his reindeer, an ice sculpture will be part of the event.

Saturday, Dec. 10, 4-8 p.m. Board one of two trolleys operating from the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum, 3378 Park Street, or at Century Village, 3899 Orders Road. Park at either location. Santa will be visiting at Century Village. There will also be entertainment including the Chamber Singers. Beverages and cookies will be available at the village; cookies at the museum.



Oral History Project Takes Shape; Documents Available At Library

Oral history previews are now available at the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum and at the Grove City Library. The previews provide a brief glimpse into each story being told.

Complete recordings and transcribed documents can be viewed at the library.

Several older oral histories have been transcribed from cassette tapes provided by the Grove City Public Library.

Oral histories are an ongoing digital recording project of the Grove City Historical Commission in cooperation with the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society.

Interviewers currently include Janet Shailer, Mike Lilly and Jim Hale. All recorded interviews are transcribed and processed by Linda Hale.

Oral histories to date include, in alphabetical order include:

Charles W. Boso, Dr. Leslie A. Bostic, Marian Madeline Goldhart Breckenridge, Diane and Frank Haimerl, Barbara Howison, Robert Eesley, William England, Agnes Eyerman, Louis Edward Eyerman, Virginia Kunz Everett and Virginia Ann Fleming.

Others are Otto Albert Galle, Wilbur Roy Gantz, Paul Grossman, Mayor George Malcolm Haughn, Eva May and Orville A. Koehler, Flossie A. Lotz, William F. Lotz Sr., Richard L. Neff, Anna Baer Mueller, Carl Anton Patzer, Captain Raymond Ruoff, Betty Cain Seese, Jack Ellworth Seese, Dr. Martin L. Stahl, Larry Thomas, Donald Washburn, Marvin Eugene Weinhart and Paul White.

Individuals who would like to suggest persons to be interviewed are encouraged to email Jim Hale at grovecityhistory@gmail.com. Also include a brief statement as to why this individual should be considered.

Short Stories, Photographs Sought For Internet Use

A collection of short stories and photographs are being sought to be part of the Society's new internet program and web site. Individual members of the Society are encouraged to write their own brief story and include a photograph for consideration.

Members can email the photograph and typed copy to grovecityhistory@gmail.com or drop the information off at the museum to the attention of Jim Hale. The Web Site Committee of the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society will determine what stories are included.

A sample story is below:

Grove City council on Aug. 22, 1887 authorized the village street department to purchase gravel to create a sidewalk along Columbus Street. A little later on July 9, 1888, council authorized the purchase of lumber to construct a plank culvert across Jackson Alley and Sugar Alley. On Sept. 4, 1889, Mayor Bartholt introduced an ordinance to purchase gravel to cover Park Street. A few years later on Aug. 5, 1890, the council authorized the purchase of lumber to repair the plank walk from Harrisburg Pike to the Midland Railroad tracks.

Southwest Pioneer

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Southwest Franklin County Historical Society
A 501C3 NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION
3378-B Park St., Grove City, OH 43123

OFFICERS

Steve Jackson, President	614-871-0081
Paul Crissinger, Vice President	614-875-8537
Trudie Gardner, Secretary	614-879-7416
Linda Randolph, Treasurer	614-875-0579
Janet Garza, Membership	614-991-4712

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

Monthly Meetings first Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.
St. John's Lutheran Church, 3220 Columbus St.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1 st Tuesday	Society Meeting, St. John's, 7:30 pm
2 nd Thursday	Commission, City Hall, 8:30 am
1 st -3 rd Mondays	Events Committee, Museum, 7:30 pm
Last Tuesday	Museum Committee, Museum, 7:30

JAMES F. HALE, NEWSLETTER EDITOR

614-875-9560 grovecityhistory@gmail.com

2017 MEMBERSHIPS

Annual -- \$15 Business -- \$50 Life -- \$150
Quarterly Newsletter Sent by E-mail
Quarterly Newsletter Sent by USPS \$9 each year