

Southwest PIONEER

MARCH 2017

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Southwest Franklin County Historical Society

www.grovecityohhistory.org

Electric, Water, Gas Encourage Growth

Grove City recorded a growth spurt in 1913 when the Columbus Railway, Power & Light Company extended its power lines throughout the village and many surrounding communities.

Before that, homes in the village were illuminated by coal oil lights, carbide gas light or artificial gas burners of all descriptions, according to an account written by local historian Harold Windsor.

Windsor said the new electric service not only provided lighting, it also made electricity available for such modern conveniences as radios and electric refrigerators.

In 1921, after a series of disastrous fires in the community, residents approved a \$25,000 bond issue for a 100,000 gallon water tank and two new wells. The water tank stood 100 feet above the ground level.

Water lines were run throughout the village. Fire hydrants were located on every street and each provided 45 pounds of water pressure.

Grove City received another major boost in 1923 when Ohio Fuel & Gas Company extended natural gas lines in town.

Before natural gas was available, homes were heated by coal, coal oil and gasoline stoves. Those were the only sources for cooking and heating.

Larry Zapp Was Elected Treasurer

Larry Zapp, a life member of the Society, was elected treasurer at the February meeting. He will complete the unexpired term of Laura Randolph who offered her resignation.



This photo was taken in the late 1800s at the Hopewell School, once located near Stringtown Road and State Route 104. Three of the children are identified by Steve McLoughlin of Reynoldsburg. Jane Elizabeth (Tilley) Herrmann is fifth from the left in the front row; Glen Hoddy is ninth from the left in the front row and Joe Tilley is at the right in the first row.

Hoddy Farm Became Phoenix Golf Links

Steve McLoughlin of Reynoldsburg recently shared a photograph with the Society and also provided some interesting background on "rural" Grove City and the development of the Phoenix Golf Links, 3415 Jackson Pike.

His great grandmother, Jane Elizabeth Tilley Herrmann attended the Hopewell School in the late 1800s. It was part of the Jackson Township School District. She was 72 when she died in 1962.

Her brother, Joe, is also in the picture. He joined the U.S. Navy as a young adult. Another brother, Tom, was struck and killed by a car on Route 62 in the 1940s.

Glen Hoddy is another Jackson Township child pictured. He was raised on the Hoddy Farm on Jackson Pike. The Tilley family worked at the Hoddy farm.

"Mr. Hoddy's daughter, Ellen, married my father's best friend, William Rogers, who was born and raised on East Gates Street, just west of Parsons Avenue in Columbus," McLoughlin recalled.

Ellen was born on the farm and lived in the Grove City area her entire life. Ellen, Bill, their children and the elder Mr. Hoddy lived on the farm until the property was sold.

The house was razed to make way for the Phoenix Golf Links that was developed in the early 1970s, about 45 years ago. After the farm land was sold, they moved to Yates Avenue in the Park Ridge subdivision in Grove City.

See Hoddy Farm Page 2

Hoddy Farm

Continued from Page 1

Bill and Ellen lived there until their deaths.

"I remember another house immediately north of the Hoddy/Rogers home as well as a very old farm house just to the south. The latter was razed around 1960 when a quarry was dug on the property. The quarry was at the very south edge of the Rogers' land," McLoughlin said.

Another old farm house stood at the Dyer-Jackson Pike intersection.

McLoughlin's parents purchased their first home in 1954 in the Westfield Estates subdivision at Frank and Gantz Roads in Franklin Township.

"We followed Gantz Road to get to Dyer Road and then followed Jackson Pike to visit the Rogers family." He said. "The Allen Dairy was located at Frank and Gantz Roads and I remember it having a small homemade ice cream shop where we stopped on occasion."

The McLoughlin family attended church in what had been the old movie theater (Little Theatre Off Broadway) in the Grove City Town Center. The Catholic parish moved from the theater to its new church and school in 1960.

Other members of Tilley family lived in and around the Grove City area and many are buried in Concord Cemetery.



There were a number of dairy farms in the Grove City area over the years. In this picture, a two wheeled horse drawn wagon is backed up against what appears to be a Model T truck loaded with milk containers. There is a name on the back of the truck. First letters are U.T. or W.T.



This photograph of a derailed engine was taken by Virgil Bethard, a Grove City resident who was responsible for many of the historic photographs taken during his lifetime. Below is another photo in what appears to be the same accident. Since this was not taken in Grove City, does anyone know where this occurred?



Committees Formed To Support Society

A number of committees have been formed to help move the Society forward in a variety of different directions.

Committees and chairs are:

Events Committee – Plans events at Century Village and coordinates volunteers. John Hines, chair; Steve Jackson, Linda Lewis, Bella Johnson, Barb Howison, Janet Shailer, Jeff May.

Education Committee – Plans and coordinates school visits to the Museum and Century Village; also visits South-Western classrooms. Bev Babbert, chair.

Fundraising Committee – Works to secure funding for Society projects with a goal of securing financial support from individuals and businesses and exploring grants. Also, coordinates the annual yard sale at Century Village. Pam Drone and Mike Esposito, co-chairs; Janet Gaza, Barb Howison, Peggy Ginnings, Steve Jackson, Larry Zapp. *See Page 3*

Committees Formed

From Page 2

Grant House Committee – Coordinates the development of the historic site working with the City of Grove City. Furnishing the house is a major task. Steve Jackson, chair; Sandi Crissinger, John Hines, Janet Garza, Bev Babbert, Jean Mallet, Peggy Ginnings, Ann Reynolds, Teresa LeMaster, Joan Eyerman, Janet Shailer, Ginger Thrush, Keith Stenerson, Barb Howison, Linda Lewis.

Membership Committee – Janet Garza, chair; Jim Hale.

Museum Committee – Plans events and displays at the museum and helps create marketing ideas. Steve Jackson, chair; Barbara Howison, Don Ivers, John Hines, Janet Garza, Janet Shailer, Mike Esposito, Beverly Babbert, Jim Hale, Linda Lewis.

Railroad Station Committee – Works to begin construction of a replica railroad station at Century Village with a \$60,000 grant through the Grove City Historical Commission. John Hines, chair; Joan Eyerman, Shirley Metiva, Ginger Thrush, Linda Lewis, Jeff May, Steve Jackson.

Township Barn Committee – Explores moving a township building to Century Village. John Hines, chair; Paul Crissinger, Ray Baer, Barb Howison, Mike Lilly, Steve Jackson.

Village Committee – Joan Eyerman, chair

Website Committee – Upgrades and includes new historic information at grovecityohhistory.org and manages the Society's Facebook page. Mark Schmidbauer, chair; Mike Esposito, Jim Hale, Steve Jackson.



Brown signs providing directions to historical sites in the Grove City area have been installed by the Service Department. This sign was installed recently along Stringtown Road at Marlane Drive.

I Remember . . .

Stories about Southwest Franklin County

These brief stories have been submitted that tell stories about Southwest Franklin County. Anyone can submit a story on any topic. Pick up one of the "I Remember" forms at the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum and share your story. Residents and members of the Society can also email articles grovecityhistory@gmail.com.

The Hoover Farm

By Tim Allen

The Hoover farm was one of Grove City's first large farm homesteads in the area. It was located near what is now South Park Industrial Park at the intersection of Gantz Road and South Park Drive and Southwestern Boulevard.

There is now a concrete marker placed on the northeast side of this intersection marking this historic farm.

The ravine on this property is now a preserve and wildlife area thanks to Grove City Parks and Recreation.

This area also has Indian mounds, shell mounds. These mounds are preserved. They were part of the Adena Indian settlements in Central Ohio that date to 100-200 AD.

The Leithart Farm

By Dr. Paul Leithart

We visited Grandpa Theodore Leithart every Sunday and ate Grandma's pastries. Grandpa loved pigs and they grew to the size of cows.

He had a log house pig pen in front of the house which is now Stringtown near Hoover Roads.

There was a huge barn we played in close to the road intersection.

We had fried chicken dinners with all the relatives. All the cooking was done in the spring house.

There was also a wood building, blacksmithing building and others for a total of 17 buildings on the property.

INVITE A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER TO JOIN THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Martin L. Stahl Recalls 20 Years With SWCS

One of the more recent individuals interviewed for the Grove City's Oral History Project was Martin L. Stahl.

He was superintendent of South-Western City School District during a period of growth that saw two new high schools open in early 1970.

Stahl thought of himself as a farm boy from Putnam County and not much more. When World War II started, he had just graduated from high school and at age 17 he volunteered for the draft.

After two and a half years in the Coast Guard, Stahl was discharged, returned home and soon married his high school sweetheart.

Stahl never intended to enter education as a career. He enrolled at Findley College with plans to earn a degree in chemistry but he was not allowed to pursue that career path because the college said that course of study was reserved for medical students.

He left Findley and after a few months enrolled at Bluffton College where he earned a bachelor's degree in just two and a half years. He also earned a spot on the college basketball team.

In 1949, he began a teaching career at Napoleon, Ohio where he also coached basketball. After seven years, he taught at Malena, Ohio. While there, Stahl completed studies for his master's degree.

After earning his degree, he applied and was hired as superintendent in a small district near Lima, Ohio. Three years later, he left the district to become a student at the Ohio State University where he earned his doctorate. Earning his degree, he returned to superintendent duties near Lima and later another school district near Dayton.

Returning from vacation in 1962, Stahl received a call from a professor at OSU telling him about a superintendent position open in Grove City. Stahl balked at first but finally agreed to interview.

He was hired in 1966 but his board of education would not agree to an early release from his contract. SWCS Superintendent Paul Hayes agreed to stay on as superintendent until Stahl could take the reins in 1967. The only thing that concerned him was taking over for Hayes, a man who was very popular.



He had some significant challenges with the community soon after relocating.

Stahl was responsible for closing Urbancrest Elementary. He also built Highland Park, Grove City and Westland High Schools and expanded the building a career offerings at Paul C. Hayes Technical School. He also saw construction of

three recreational centers.

He said he had no problem with renewal school levies but Grove City wouldn't support new school levies. Voters in the Franklin Heights and Westland areas always were better to approve levy requests.

For many years, Stahl had to stop sports competitions between the three high schools because of a rivalry. Fights had become common and on one occasion a riot broke out during a basketball game at Grove City High School.

"We had a lot of merit scholars," he said. Hayes had started a gifted program one year before he left the district. Stahl's wife, Martha, was a substitute teacher and took over the gifted program and held that position for 19 years. For a while, the gifted program was at Urbancrest.

He also recalled the natural gas crisis of the early 1970s. Westland and Grove City High School were heated with natural gas and they were closed to help ease the crisis.

During that time high school classes were moved to Pleasant View Middle School where the building was heated by fuel oil. Each high school had formal classes only one day a week. Students had to study at home the other days.

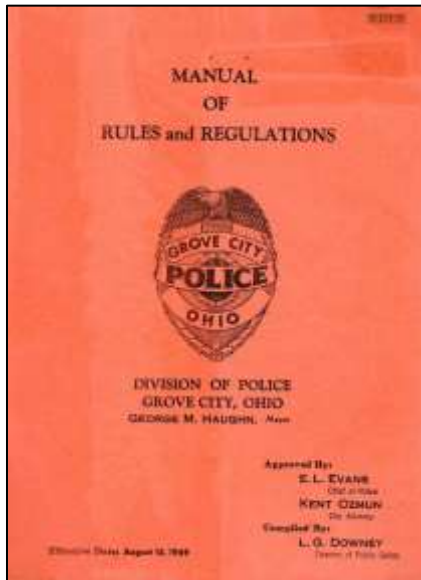
In 1978, the district faced another crisis. This time it was a blizzard that closed roads, businesses and schools. Stahl said the blizzard was much worse than expected but all students were delivered home safely.

The schools became overnight housing for many families.

Snow days created almost constant problems. He said if schools were open during a snow, parents complained and if schools were closed there was another group to complain.

Continued on Page 5

The first and only known copy of a manual of rules and regulations for the Grove City Police Department is on display at the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum. The manual was prepared by Safety Director L. Gene Downey in August 1969.



Downey was a former K-9 police officer with the department during the Mayor George M. Haughn administration.

Superintendent Stahl

From Page 4

Stahl said he would get up at 4 a.m. if there was a considerable snowfall and drive some of the roads in the district. "I learned early in my career that if Columbus called off school, I'd better call off school," he said.

This interview and other oral histories are available on the second floor of the Grove City Library. They are available in voice and transcribed.

Business Owners From 100 Years Ago

There was a variety of businesses in Grove City looking back 100 years ago.

Bertha Alkire, Virginia Alkire, Katherine Cruzen, Katy Dee and Harriette Sibray were dressmakers and Alice Nichols was a milliner.

Men by the name of Green and Barbee operated a cigar factory; Mrs. S. E. Johnson was a dealer in wallpaper; and Weygandt and Kalklosch were undertakers. Kalklosch was also a local furniture dealer.

There were five men who manufactured shoes. They included Louis Noetlich, Chris Schwenkel, A. Ketterer, Alonzo Kingery and Charles Wetzgal.

Charles Krumm, Anton Pilger, William Kroneberger and Jim Arnold were harness makers; Joseph Buchholtz was a wagon maker; John Baumgartner was a road contractor.

Norris Funeral Home Sold 48 Years Ago To Schoedinger

Forty-eight years ago this month, the Norris Funeral Home was sold to the Schoedinger Funeral Service of Columbus. The new name for the business was changed to Schoedinger-Norris Funeral Home.

Kenneth Norris and wife, Mary, sold the business that was created by his father, John E. Norris, on March 1, 1969.

The Norris Funeral Home was founded in 1902 in Harrisburg. After John's death, the business name changed to J. E. Norris Sons Funeral Home.

In 1932, Kenneth and his mother, Glendora, opened a funeral home in Grove City and sold the Harrisburg funeral home to Garfield A. DeVoss. The mother-son business operated out of several different locations on Broadway in Grove City.

In 1935, Kenneth and Mary Norris took over ownership and management.

Around 1940, they built a new funeral home at the current location on Broadway and Cleveland Avenue.

The Schoedinger Company, which purchased the business in 1966 from Ken and Mary Norris, was established in 1855 in downtown Columbus.

John W. Wilson, a Schoedinger associate, took over management of their Grove City facility.



Check your attics!

Look in those old boxes... We are interested in any old photographs that show buildings or businesses in Southwest Franklin County. We can scan the picture and return the original. Bring the pictures to the museum weekdays, 10 am until 4 pm or email grovecityhistory@gmail.com
THANKS...



There was a time when a needle was one of the most important items in a home. They were used to make new clothes and to mend those they were wearing out. Today, most people just buy something new at a department store.

President's Message

By Steve Jackson

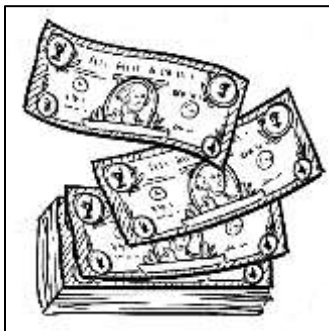
We're three months into the New Year and have a way to go to accomplish everything that is ahead of us.

In the last days of 2016, we were successful in launching our new website www.grovecityohhistory.org. That was a major accomplishment but there is more ahead.

We have several committee organizations this year but one of the new committees is the Fund Raising Committee.

The actual name for this group could still be up in the air and hopefully its members can agree on a permanent name that explains its mission.

Pam Drone and Mike Esposito are the co-chairs for the committee and both have their work cut out for them. Every segment of the Society is dependent on this group's success.



Until recently, Society funds have been declining each year. To be a successful organization it takes money and it is going to be every member's

responsibility to help in any way possible when fund raising opportunities are suggested.

Membership fees alone will not fund our future. Organized events are necessary.

Have you renewed your 2017 Membership?

If not, please write that check today.

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EMAIL _____

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NEWSLETTER BY MAIL \$ 9.00 extra

Newsletter by email no extra cost

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3378-B Park St.
Grove City, OH 43123
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Southwest Pioneer

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Southwest Franklin County Historical Society

A 501C3 NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

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MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

Monthly Meetings first Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church, 3220 Columbus St.

MONTHLY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

2017 MEMBERSHIP FEES

Annual -- \$15 Business -- \$50 Life -- \$150

Quarterly Newsletter Sent by email

Quarterly Newsletter Sent by USPS \$9 each year