

Southwest PIONEER

JUNE 2017

grovecityhistory@gmail.com

Southwest Franklin County Historical Society

www.grovecityohhistory.org

Heritage Celebration Plans Are Announced

The annual Heritage Celebration at Century Village is Saturday, June 3, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Sunday, June 4, from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Get a taste of everyday life in an emerging Ohio farm community in the late 1800s.

Building tours, interactions with re-enactors and demonstrations are all part of the weekend activities.

Bluegrass music will fill the air throughout the day.

Step into the blacksmith shop to see an actual blacksmith demonstrate customary metal forging techniques; toss horseshoes, taste hardtack, use a washboard to clean clothes, saw wood and experience the art of making rope.

Wander through the log cabins and barns, a one-room school house, general store and the Farm Museum at the Bob Evans Barn.

At 1 p.m. Saturday, the Ohio Village Muffins baseball team will challenge the Century Village Greyhounds to a vintage game that follows the rules of 1860.



An outdoor non-denominational church service is planned Sunday at 10 a.m.

This annual event is sponsored by the City of Grove City in cooperation with the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society. Admission and parking are free.

Food, drinks and crafts are available to purchase. Invite friends and neighbors.



This is a picture of the Story School that was once located on Kropp Road in Pleasant Township. Pleasant View Middle School, 7255 Kropp Road, now stands on the site. Story School was on property once owned by Marmaduke Story. He owned both sides of Kropp Road.

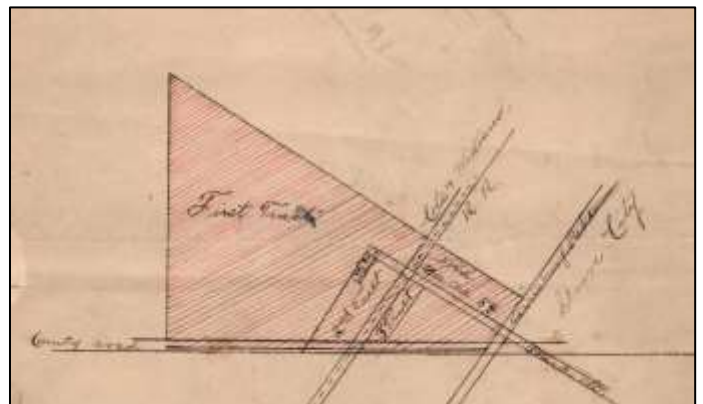
West of Broadway

Did Adam Grant Plan A Town Named Beulah?

Did Adam G. Grant intend to establish his own separate town located west of Broadway?

There is little real evidence to support such a claim but an old abstract uncovered recently by Mayor Richard L. "Ike" Stage would seem to indicate the Town of Beulah was at least worth a mention on a legal document housed with the Auditor of State in Columbus, Ohio.

The abstract covers three tracts of land



bounded today on the south by Grove City Road, the north at Grant Avenue and west of Broadway. It was all part of Survey Number 1388 of the Virginia Military District. The first tract covers 57 acres, a second tract is two acres and the smallest covers $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre.

William Foster Breck and his wife, Elizabeth Cambel Smith Breck, purchased the property in 1847, five years before Breck founded Grove City. *Continued on Page 2*

On Lot One Hundred (100) in the Town of Beulah, Jackson Township, Franklin County, Ohio, as per recorded plat, Plat Book 4, page 205, Franklin County Records.

Town of Beulah

Continued from Page 1

They purchased the land from Breck's father-in-law, John Smith and his wife, Olive. Smith had purchased the property in 1838.

Much later, Grant purchased the property with the intent of selling lots and constructing homes for the growing community known today as the Beulah Addition. At the time Grant purchased the property, Grove City was located only on the east side of Broadway.

The land had originally been granted by the United States to officers and soldiers of the Virginia Line who served during the Revolutionary War.



Lieutenant Colonel William Washington, left, a second cousin to George Washington, in 1787 took possession of the land. The 59¾ acres were only part of a 2,000 acre military warrant that had been deeded to Colonel Washington.

In 1883-1884, Grant began to purchase the land west of Broadway, known then as the Grove City Free Turnpike Road.

The first recorded mention of A. G. Grant's Beulah Subdivision was in 1897 and two years later the first mention of the Town of Beulah is recorded. This plat of Grant's Beulah Subdivision is dated around 1897 and covers 47.81 acres within an area identified as the Town of Beulah. That plat did not extend to Broadway instead stopping at the railroad tracks.

The abstract indicates Fannie and Herbert Baumann were likely the first persons to purchase lots in the Town of Beulah. They purchased two lots for \$100 in 1889.

Numerous other mentions of the Town of Beulah are contained in the document. Another reference of the Town of Beulah is included in a Michigan Mutual Life Insurance Company indenture dated 1899.

The last mention of the Town of Beulah was in 1912. The first mention in the abstract

that Grant's Beulah Addition was located in the Village of Grove City was in 1921.

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 to grovecityhistory@gmail.com. These are reprinted in the writer's own words.

First Children in Township

By Dick Shover

I enjoyed reading about the Grant family [on the Society's new web site]. However, one statement in the piece about Adam Gabriel Grant is incorrect.

Adam was not the first white male born in Jackson Township. Speaking only for my earliest related families that I have researched, there were quite a few males born before Adam.

Nicholas Haughn had at least three sons born in what became Jackson Township. Perhaps because Jackson Township was not yet formed, they would not count.

However, Martin Borrer/Boyer and Anna Bennett were married in 1815 when the Township was formed. They had four sons born between 1817 and 1828.

Jacob Borrer III and Catherine Coonrad/Conrad had six sons born between 1820 and 1840.

Solomon Borrer and Delilah Miller had three sons born between 1834 and 1840.

Finally, Absalom Borrer, by his first wife, Elizabeth Seeds, had four sons born between 1826 and 1840.

Over and above the Borrers, surely many other historical families in the township had sons that preceded Adam Grant, born in 1840.

That statement has since been corrected on the web site.

Civic Club Donation Creates Public Reading Room In 1917



One hundred years ago last month, the Women's Civic Club gave \$63 to establish a public reading room in Grove City. It was free to the public and staffed by volunteers.

The library at the time was located in the Director's Room at the First National Bank. The bank was located at the corner of Broadway and Columbus Streets. The bank donated the space and paid the utilities.

Obituaries

William Lee Howison

William Lee Howison, 80, born in Richwood, OH, passed away March 11, 2017. He is survived by wife of 51 years, Barbara. He was one of the three founding members of the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society.

Bill was an avid historian of early Ohio history, including the Woodland Indian tribes, Darby Creek, and southwest Franklin County local history.

He had lots of life experiences as a surgical nurse, private detective, polygraph examiner and security officer.

He retired from Ohio Polychem in 2013, but he was most proud of working as a private detective and polygraph examiner at National Detective Bureau. Bill was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church.

Raymond Edward Ruoff, Sr.

Raymond Edward Ruoff, Sr., 98, passed away Sunday, March 5, 2017. He was born Aug. 20, 1918 in Grove City, to the late Edward and Emma (Kropp) Ruoff.

He was a proud WWII Army sergeant serving in the European Theatre. He received special military training at the Commando Combat School.

Ray served the Grove City community as a policeman for many years and retired as police captain.

He enjoyed cheering on the Ohio State Buckeyes, sharing WWII stories, tending his garden, hunting and participating in parades with his antique tractor and the hit-and-miss engine.

He was a member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Grove City and the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society.

Flora M. "Flo" Nicholson

Flora Nicholson, 83, died April 4, 2017. She was the wife of one of the founding members of the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society, Earl D. Nicholson. She was a long time employee of Motorist Mutual Insurance Co.

Samuel Fogle

Sam Fogle, 24, of Grove City, passed away April 19, 2017 at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. He was a 2011 graduate and honor student of St. Charles High School and a 2015 honors graduate of Miami University.

He worked as an auditor for Grant Thornton LLP. Sam obtained the rank of Eagle Scout and as a Scout project, he built the herb garden at Century Village. He was a life member of the Society.

Grove City Oral History

History: An Important Part Of Bob Brofford's Life

Arthur (Bob) Webster Brofford is a man who lives history, especially when it comes to St. John's Lutheran Church. He is one of a handful of people who have dedicated many hours to preservation of local history.

He was born near San Margherita in a farmhouse on McKinley Avenue, an unincorporated neighborhood west of Columbus.

The family moved many times but Bob had special fond memories living on Mound Street near the Redbird Stadium where he had a "knot hole" pass to all of the baseball games.

His father built a house in Truo Township in an area then known as Glencoe, now Whitehall when Brofford was a teen. He said they had no utilities at their house except for an indoor hand pump for water and an outhouse.

He attended Reynoldsburg and then graduated from West High School in 1949. After high school, Bob enlisted in the U. S. Navy in 1951.

His first assignment was on the USS Winston during the Korean War. He was later assigned to the USS Mt. Olympus (an admiral's flag ship) in the amphibious forces in the Pacific.

Returning home, he married Nancy Ett and they had five children. In 1979, he married Lois Ruoff File.

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Brofford's Life As Historian

Continued from Page 3

His first connection to Grove City was through his wife, Lois. She grew up in the area of the Presbyterian Church on Broadway. Lois also acquired her father's farm after his death. It was located at Stringtown Road and Hoover where the Kroger grocery is now located.

Both Lois and Bob were raised Lutheran and became members at St. John's Lutheran Church in Grove City. While the couple lived in Derby, Ohio, Bob's interest in history began to develop. He started his quest into history despite a busy life on their 811 acre hog farm. They bred their own pigs, fattened them and hauled them to Falters Meats on Greenlawn Avenue in Columbus. He said they made a trip to Falters about once a week.

Bob's interest in history started with research and the history of St. John's. He accomplished this by spending time talking with older members of the congregation.

The congregation had a wide appeal including members from Lockbourne, West Jefferson and Lilly Chapel. It was more than a worship service, it was a social event where people spent time together visiting, he recalled.

"I mean, you know, today its hurry up, get out of here with a 10 minute sermon and we'll be on our way," Bob said.

One of the most interesting facts he uncovered was that in 1855 there were three Lutheran congregations in the area just after Grove City came into existence.

There were two entirely separate St. John's congregations that met in a church at Columbus Street and Arbutus Avenue. That building still stands on the northwest corner. The congregations were St. John's German and St. John's English congregations.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church was located where the current St. John's Church sits today. Bob said St. Paul's was founded by a Lutheran pastor who had to travel from the west side of Columbus. He speculated the pastor's horse "wore out" from the difficult roads of the time.

The St. Paul congregation faltered and eventually merged with St. John's German congregation. St. John's English congregation separated and formed the Presbyterian Church in Grove City.

St. Paul's congregation had a cemetery on the church property. All of the graves that could

be located were moved to the Lutheran Cemetery on Grove City Road. Bob said there is a strong possibility other graves are still at the St. John's site under a parking lot.

There was also a document that indicated a Lutheran church might have been built on what is now Park Street.

In the very early days of Grove City, William F. Breck, founder of Grove City, offered to give Lot 67 on School Street (Park Street) to the Lutheran congregation for the purpose of erecting a brick church. That note is framed at St. John's. Bob said he believes that offer was never accepted.

"The community today is undergoing remarkable change and I wish I was younger," Brofford said thinking of what the future holds.



Restaurant Promotes History

If you haven't been to China Bell lately you probably haven't noticed their new table placemats that promote local history.

Gary Shyu approached the Society for help in designing the placemat that showcases pictures and a bit of history.

China Bell is the first restaurant in Grove City to work with the Society in promoting local history.

Information Needed . . .

Anyone with information about the two photographs below is encouraged to call the museum at 614-277-3061 or email the information to grovecityhistory@gmail.com.



This photo of the old Grove City-Jackson Township High School was donated by Grove City Parks and Recreation. Can anyone fill in some information on the small frame house between the two schools?



This metal sign identifies Huffman's Poultry Farm that was once located at 1485 Borrer Road. It was recently donated to the museum.



Frank's Safe Kidney & Liver Cure

This is a most unusual medicine bottle because it is a rich purple instead of the brown and clear glass used for most "cure all" products 100 years ago.

Stop by the museum to read its most unusual message trying to assure people it was 'not habit forming'.

Ohio Village Is Open Now Thru Labor Day

Ohio Village is now open for the summer months Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sundays from noon - 5 p.m.



Many changes have occurred at the village this year as it transitions from the 1860 era to the 1890s.

The village is located at the Ohio History Center, 800 E. 17th Avenue just off I-71 North. Many new activities are part of the program.

Are Your 2017 Dues Paid?

Notices were mailed recently to individuals who have not paid their 2017 dues. As a result, this may be the last newsletter delivered to some people. Dues help support Society activities and projects.

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

2nd Thursday Commission, City Hall, 8:30 am

1st-3rd Mondays Events Committee, Museum, 7:30 pm

Last Tuesday Museum Committee, Museum, 7:30

2017 MEMBERSHIP FEE

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

Quarterly Newsletter Sent by email

Quarterly Newsletter Sent by USPS \$9 e

It happened 21 years ago next month

Propane Explosions Rocked City

THE GROVE CITY PIONEER
FRIDAY, JULY 10, 1996
SERVING GREATER GROVE CITY SINCE 1927
Explosions rock



It was Monday, July 8, 1996 when a 33-gallon propane tank at Ferrellgas, a business located on South Broadway, caught fire and exploded.

This set off a chain reaction of explosions that caused the evacuation of many homes on the southern edge of Grove City. The evacuation area included homes and businesses south of Kingston Avenue, west of Haughn Road, north of Ventura and east of Broadway.

It was an extremely dangerous situation for the Jackson Township Fire Department and other fire fighters and emergency personnel from surrounding departments assisting.

One of the big challenges faced was the fact that there were five 30,000 gallon propane tanks in the danger zone.

Some of the smaller propane tanks typically used for grilling exploded and shot as high as 100 feet into the air.

The Ferrellgas building sustained heavy damage along with others including Larry's Trucking and Suburban Propane. Sue Ellen's Restaurant was a total loss.



Jackson Township Fire Department Photo

This photo shows more of the propane tanks that exploded. There is a display at the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum that shows more visual impressions and one of the propane tanks from the fire.

The American Red Cross set up an emergency shelter at Grove City High School for those evacuated from their homes.

All area township fire departments including Columbus, helped fight the blaze. The Franklin County Sheriff dispatched officers to assist the Grove City Police Department.

As if that wasn't enough for the township fire department to deal with, another potentially major fire broke out at the then Bonded Oil Station on North Broadway near Southwest Boulevard.

For a while, there was a scare that the two might be related but they weren't. A vehicle was destroyed in that fire.

Members of the Jackson Township Fire Department were honored later that year as parade marshals for the 1996 Arts in the Alley Parade.

Welcome Center, Museum Now Open Saturday AM

The Grove City Welcome Center and Museum is now open Saturdays from 8 a.m. until noon during Farmers Market.

Normal hours are 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and on Tuesdays the museum is open until 8 p.m.

Stop in and see the new exhibits.

Residents Question Homestead Site As Public Park Area

A meeting requested by residents living in the area of the Grant Homestead was held with members of city government and representatives of the Society May 23 at the Kingston Center.

The group posed 18 questions to Councilman Steve Robinette, the former Grove City Police Chief, requesting the meeting. Safety Director and Assistant City Administrator William Vedra conducted the meeting and answered the questions. Council Jeff Davis also attended.

“Most of the residents with property abutting the Grant Homestead and those on Sawyer Drive/Court and Gladman want information,” according to Resident Liz Thompson. “We only learned of the plans when Ralph Luzader, whose home is at Sawyer and Gladman, saw people walking the property and asked what the plans were,” Thompson said in an email message.

“He was given the map that I mention in the questions below. Before that, no one let us know about the “park” and parking (especially those surrounding the homestead and those directly across the street.)”

Thompson questioned if notice had been given in a legal notice that if so it was inadequate because few people ever read legal notices in the newspapers.

One question came up at the meeting asking why paint was used instead of the previously whitewash look.

Steve Jackson, Society president, said bricks used in construction of the house were soft bricks made on site around 1840. The brick was not fired allowing them to cure the way brick is made today. The paint used will help preserve the brick well into the future.

The questions are listed below; city’s response is in italics.

1. What will be the hours of operation? *Not determined at this time.*
2. Will the entire property be enclosed by fencing? *No. Split rail will return along Haughn Road.*

3. If not, can people access it as a park at times other than when the building(s) are open for tours or special events? *Yes.*
4. There is a "No Trespassing" sign in front. *It will be removed when construction is complete.*
5. The existing fence at the property line to properties abutting the Grant Homestead was put in by Ruth Jividen. Is it going to be removed? *No.*
6. Will there be a privacy fence/hedgerow installed for these same properties and on the North side of the property? *No.*
7. Parking: there are 10 spaces now. Are there plans for more parking? If so, where? *No additional parking is planned for the site.*
8. When there is an event, such as opening day, 10 spaces won’t be enough. People will park on Gladman and Sawyer Drive/Court. This already happens during the Arts Festival and the parades. When this happens, a fire truck could not get down either street. Will the city post no parking signs on one side of these streets when an event is planned? Or how do you plan to assure the safety of these affected residents? *With permission, event parking will be directed to Park Street and J.C. Sommer Schools. Gladman Avenue is 23 feet inside curb to curb. Sawyer Drive also is 23’ inside curb to curb. Sawyer Drive (Haughn to Gladman) is posted as no parking signs on the north side of the street. The average sedan is six feet wide. The maximum width of a fire apparatus is eight feet. Requiring a total of 20 feet. Option: Post no parking on the remainder of Sawyer.*
9. We were told any tour buses will let people off on Haughn and park somewhere else and come back for the people. Is this accurate information? *We have not discussed tour busses. They could park in the bus pull off on Kingston Avenue or Park Street.*
10. In one newspaper article, it was stated plans included having carriage rides from Town Center to the home. If the Homestead is blocked from Haughn for vehicles, as we were told, how and where will the carriage rides let people off? Is this still planned? *Yes, the Haughn Road drives will remain for special events such as carriage rides.*
11. A “loading service” road is being put in from Gladman to the back of the barn. What exactly will be loaded or unloaded?

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Residents Question

Continued from Page 7

Anything that could be used to support the continued care of the home and work on the remaining buildings.

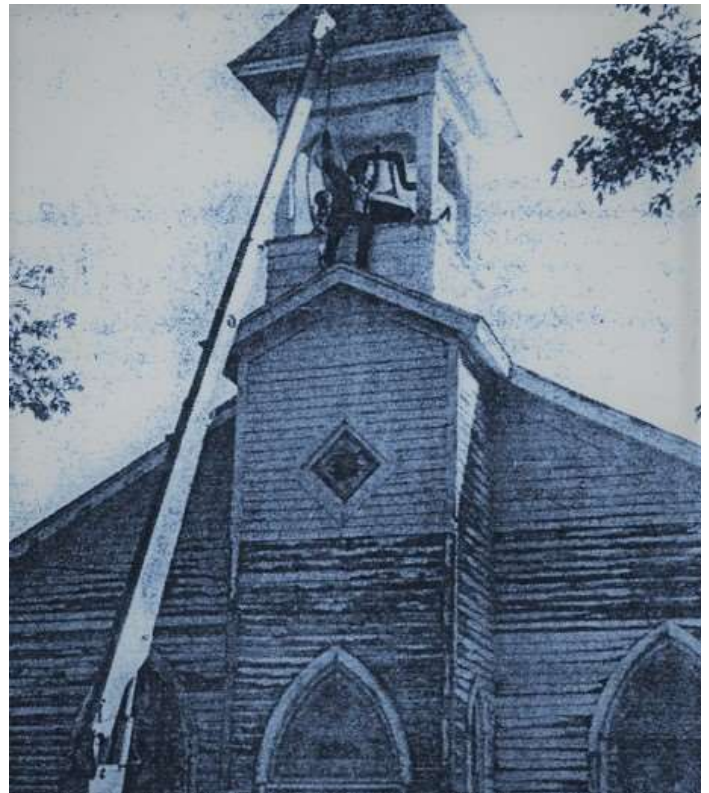
12. Is this part of the “event” planning? *It may be used to support an event.*
13. What kind of events are planned? *No events are planned beyond the dedication.*
14. What are the plans for exterior lighting for parking and the land/house? *No additional lighting is planned. If we do, it will meet the building code and not cross property lines.*
15. Is opening day July 1? Mayor’s office said there will be a bluegrass band. Is this something we can expect at other times? *Since no other events are planned, we do not know.*
16. Is it going to be like the current museum on Park St.? *The Home will be a museum of the Grant-Sawyer Home, decorated with period furniture from the family and Grove City area residents. The Historical Society will play a significant role in the programming and operation.*
17. The map shows Outdoor Movies and Events. Explain. Especially since we were told it will be treated as a park and close at dusk. *No plans for movies. It was a suggestion from the consultant.*
18. We were told the drawing/map was only a concept. But it says it’s a Master Plan. Which is it? *It is both, a master plan (vision) submitted as a concept from the consultant.*
19. We were told only funding was available for Phase One, which is the house. The parking is shown to be Phase Two. So when did the funding happen? *The phasing of the master plan is a concept submitted by the consultant, like other components, we can choose to adopt or reject all or parts of it. The parking lot was included with the repaving of Gladman Avenue. This eliminated the contractor’s mobilization expense for a separate project.*
20. How are you planning on informing residents of future plans? *We will engage the public like all other projects and events that occur in the City, using a combination of methods, web, social media and sometimes newspaper.*

Mr. Vedra also pointed out in the meeting that the property will be identified as The Grant-Sawyer Home according to the agreement with the seller of the property. He also pointed out

that had the city not purchased the property that with its current zoning, a 14 unit apartment building with some 30 parking spaces could have been built on site if a private buyer acquired the property.



This is another print from an old negative. It was uncovered in an aged Davidyan Photoery Shop envelope that was located at 384 Luckhaupt Ave., Columbus. According to the envelope, it shows Miss Helen Borrer sitting on a wagon being pulled by a pony. The house cannot be identified. Any ideas?



The Concord Methodist Church bell was removed in October 1990 because of safety concerns. Dick Shover had an extensive file on the church but could find nothing about the origin of the bell. He said his uncle, Ormond Shover, was about five years old when the bell was first installed and Ormond was born in 1902. Martin Addy of Mid-State Diesel at Pleasant Corners provided equipment and worked with Rick Weber and Jeff Wellman to remove the bell. It’s now located at Century Village.