



SOUTHWEST PIONEER

MARCH 2020

SOUTHWEST FRANKLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
3378-B PARK ST., GROVE CITY, OHIO 43123

The Case of the 'Trespassing' Grove City Privy

This article was provided by Courtney Barr, granddaughter of the late Grove City Attorney Richard D. Clark. She has offered to share other stories Mr. Clark has written for future newsletters. The real family names in this article have been changed for privacy concerns.

By Richard G. Clark

The Hall family lived in a very neat, painted, well cared for small home next door to old lady Gilmer's ramshackled, unpainted, almost falling down house just west of the railroad tracks in Grove City.

Although there was an ordinance prohibiting outhouses in town, Mrs. Gilmer owned a ramshackled, unpainted, falling down outdoor privy located adjacent to the Hall backyard.

The Halls had complained to the village several times about the problem, without result, because Mrs. Gilmer had no money and could not afford modern facilities.

The Halls decided to build a fence between the two yards, and had a surveyor come and put in stakes along the property line. The discovery was made that about half of the Gilmer privy was trespassing on the Hall property.

The Halls went to see John D. Phillips, an attorney who came to Grove City on Saturdays to cover for a friend of his who was called back into service during the Korean War.

John advised his clients to file an affidavit for trespassing against Mrs. Gilmer which they did, and the matter was set for hearing in the local Mayor's Court.

The entire Gilmer family rose to the defense of Grandma, and came to me. Whether I ever got paid for services is problematical, because none of them had any money.

The mayor set the hearing for five thirty in the afternoon in order that we might all go look at the scene. When I got there, I wanted to run.

The privy was not only dilapidated, it smelled. My God it smelled. Its odors permeated the neighborhood, some of its contents had oozed out and overflowed. It was a health hazard.

I really did not know John then. We had a nodding acquaintanceship, which, commencing with that evening, became a long friendship and association. After that episode, I had to remember him.

We were all standing in the Hall yard, and John was attempting to explain to the mayor and to me the exact location of the lot line.

Continued on Page 2

Some Employers Offer Grants For Volunteers

Society members who are still working should consider asking employers if they offer grants to non-profit organizations when employees complete volunteer efforts.

Society Member Denice Fogle asked her employer if they had such a program and the result was a \$500 payment to the historical society for her volunteer hours.

Often, these programs are part of a business plan but employees must ask then take the initiative to participate.

Programs, such as this, provide important financial resources to nonprofits such as the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society.

It doesn't hurt to ask the question. Who knows, a question could motivate a business to create a similar grant program that encourages volunteerism.

Website, Museum Have New Life

The Society's website has a new exhibit that includes not only the Beulah Park history but also the future for the area that was once Ohio's original thoroughbred race track. If you haven't visited lately you should stop by at 3378 Park Street. Also, the website will have new and revised content over the next several months. Be sure to visit often.

Go to www.grovecityohhistory.org

Trespassing Privy

Continued from page 1

He stepped backwards, and unfortunately managed to get both feet in the Gilmer outhouse overflow. What a mess! The mayor immediately announced that we would reassemble in half an hour at the municipal building.

This gave John a chance to partially repair his damage, and gave me a change to compose myself, and quit laughing. The municipal building did not amount to much in those years. It contained one good sized room at the front which served as the mayor's office, the police office, and council chambers.

Directly behind this office was the village jail, which contained three cells. When the mayor reconvened court, John arose, and said "it is really a terrible thing when a quarrel develops between neighbors."

I found out later that he was nick named "Sincere John" when he was in law school. He sounded like a cross between a certain type preacher, and a funeral director.

Suddenly a loud voice originating in the confines of the jail yelled "I don't have to listen to this kind of crap." The mayor rose and went into the jail section and shouted "Shut up."

I talked and explained how long the old privy had been there and claimed adverse possession. The jail was silent. John started in again and so did the jailbird, who suggested very profanely that John did not know what he was talking about and was really a dumb sob.

The mayor went back into the jail, and said "Now if you don't get quiet, I'll see that you get quiet." The prisoner said "What the hell are you going to do with me, I am already in jail." John, being his usual polite self, said "I do not believe that the gentleman appreciates my point of view in this matter."

The Gilmer family agreed to clean things up, empty the privy, and eventually tear it down. The Halls built their fence, and screened themselves from both the Gilmer house, and privy.

Trespassing charges were dismissed, and in a few years the Halls sold out and moved to Florida. Bizarre? Perhaps, but something similar happened to John every day. As he often asked, God, where do they come from?

Have You Ever
invited a friend or neighbor
to attend a
Society meeting?

HISTORY Dateline

By Jim Hale



You might have noticed a few changes in this newsletter, but then it has been three months since the last one was published. We have a new nameplate that has incorporated the American and Ohio flags. The flag art was "borrowed" from Ted Berry's Facebook page.

We also switched to a new type face that will allow us to provide a little more text but don't be concerned with the size of the type, it is the same as before.

One of my goals this year is to engage Society members to participate in the newsletter by sharing personal stories, memories and even photographs. History can be interesting, fun and something we can share with each other.

Marilyn Gibboney is one of those individuals who has shared many stories about Grove City and Southwest Franklin County. She told me one time back in 2011 that she was and has always been a history buff.

Her interest was spurred on by family tales of years long gone followed by a college education at Capital University with a major in history.

Marilyn's interest in the written word came as a youth when she discovered there was little information at the local library about the founding fathers of Grove City. She helped change that by becoming involved.

She was one of many local residents who rallied to preserve the Gantz farmhouse when it was slated to be torn down in the early 1980s.

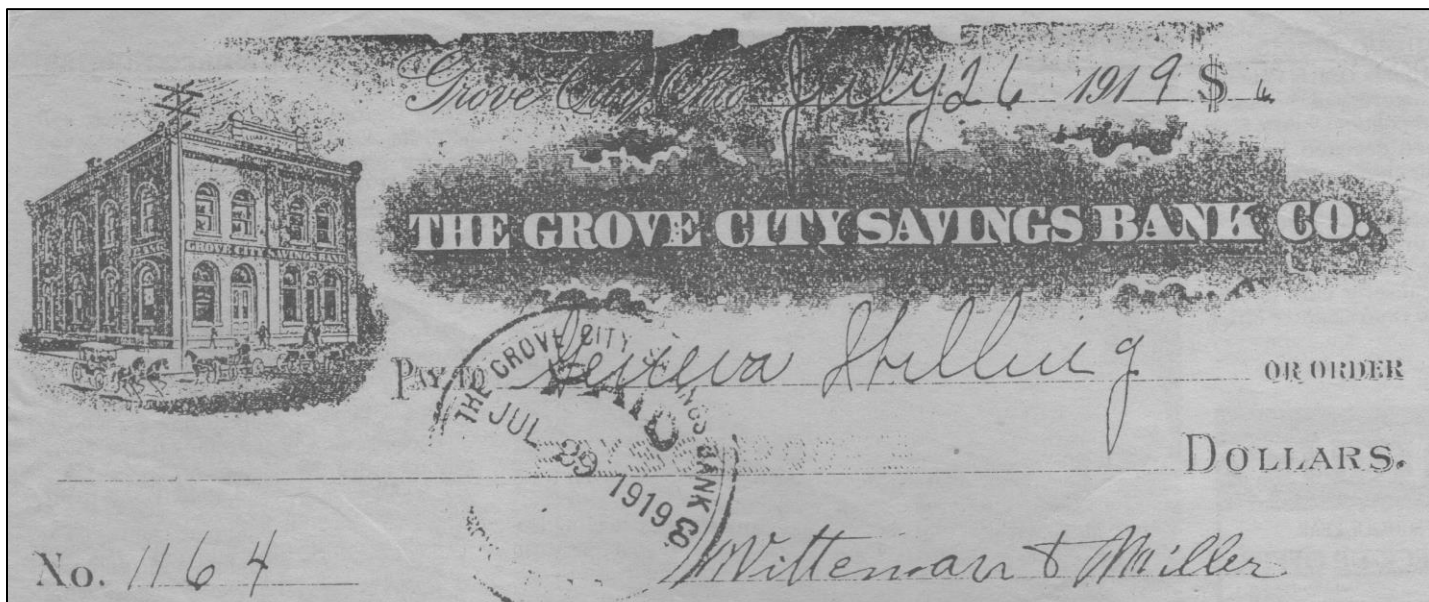
Marilyn once told me saving the Gantz farmhouse helped create interest in forming a permanent historical society.

Until then, there had been several "historical groups" over the years but most were formed for specific purpose and didn't last.

She remembers the groundwork for the Southwest Franklin County Historical Society happened when Earl Nicholson along with Bill and Barbara Howison met at the library and made plans for a permanent organization. The Society was formed in 1982.

Marilyn served as an officer in the Society for 14 years and as its president from 1990 until she stepped down in 2004. Marilyn has authored numerous articles and is responsible for the two Reflections books which are still available for sale at the museum.

She was recognized in 2012 when she was grand marshal at the Arts in the Alley Parade. The theme that year was very appropriate; it was *Making History*.



This check was written July 26, 1919 to Geneva Willing Shelling who, at the time, was the bookkeeper for the Witteman and Miller Feed Store located on Grant Avenue. The \$6 check is believed to be wages. The check was issued by the Grove City Savings Bank Company located on the southeast corner of Broadway and Park Street. That building still stands today in the Grove City Town Center. The bank is considered to be the first bank to operate in the village. Grove City's second bank was organized as The Farmers and Merchants Bank which later became The First National Bank. Both banks were formed in 1903 and were the only banks in Grove City until after World War II.

Share Historical Society From Comfort of Your Home

Did you know you can help promote local history and support the Society on your computer?

Unfortunately, there are still too many people living in Southwest Franklin County totally unaware that there is a historical group and even more who have never visited or heard of the museum.



Instagram

Don Ivers, a city employee at the museum and a Society member, says he is still surprised how many people visit for the first time and are surprised at the all-inclusive museum.

Consider friending the Society's Facebook page and share at least a few of the posts each month.

At least two items are shared weekly on Facebook. The Society also shares on Instagram, for those who use that post. If you use either in your social media, consider sharing a bit of history with friends and

relatives.

This is just two ways members can help spread the word and draw more attention to the Society's work. It's also a good way to call attention to other local historical sites such as Century Village and the Grant Sawyer Home. Who knows?

It might encourage others to join the organization and become involved. Volunteer help is always needed for the many projects undertaken.



Breck's Market was the first grocery to operate west of the railroad tracks in Grove City. Photo by Gail Whitman.

New Grocery Opened in 1953 West of Grove City Downtown

Ned Breckenridge, a Grove City native, was the manager for the newly opened Breck's Market on Grove City Road just west of the railroad tracks.

He also owned the building that housed the market according to an article in the May 22, 1953 issue of *The Grove City Record*.
Continued on Page 4

New Grocery Opened

Continued from Page 3

There had been many other grocery stores in Grove City since the village of founded in 1852. One included a Kroger store in the downtown near the Jackson Alley and Broadway. Breck's Market was a welcome addition to the business community in its day.

Breck's Market was considered a full-service grocery offering shoppers a fresh meat, dairy products along with a refrigerated section for fresh vegetables and fruits.

Breck's Market had competition.

Howard 'Sig' Sigman opened his Red and White Supermarket on South Broadway near Paul Street it's believed around 1947 and he claimed his store was the first supermarket in the area. He also owned a drive-in restaurant next to the store.

At the time, the Red and White Store wasn't located in Grove City proper. It was in Jackson Township because the village had not annexed land south of town.

Sigman's store was unique because he purchased used fats and cooking oils. Both Sigman's and Breck's markets offered fresh cuts of meat presented in refrigerated units. Breck's Market was purchased by Lewis and Paul Massenelli in 1959 when it became identified as Massenelli's Market.



The brothers were not new to the grocery business; they had operated a grocery on Goodale Street in Columbus before deciding to relocate to Grove City. The business was eventually taken over by Paul's son, Dominic.

Grove City has a long history of grocery businesses.

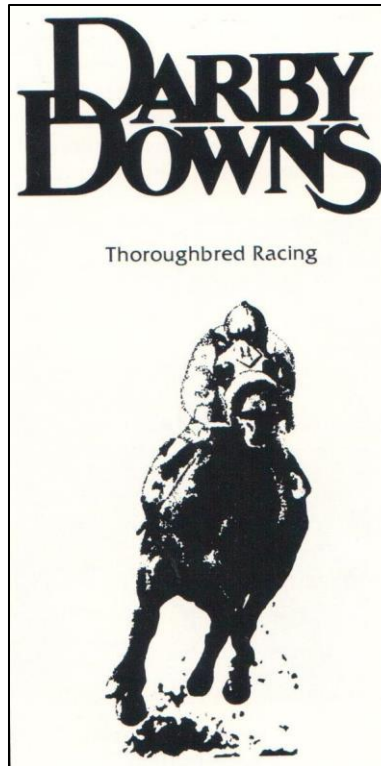
Back in 1938, a rumor spread through the community that the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company grocery chain, better known as A&P, was opening a business in the Rolla W. White building on Broadway.



White, owner of the storefront and a prominent businessman, had announced his retirement to become effective March 1, 1938. He had been in the dry goods and furniture business since 1914.

How the rumor started was never uncovered but it couldn't have been further from the truth. Before announcing his retirement, White had already made arrangement to lease the storefront to the Ben Franklin Store, a popular nationwide 5 cent to \$1 store.

An A&P Store would eventually open on Broadway but it was in the Hadler Center at Southwest and Broadway.



Beulah Park's Heritage Has New Role

Beulah Park is as much of Grove City's historical past as the founding of the village back in 1852.

Today, plans are in place for the 212-acre site to become a mixed use area for housing and businesses. The site is eventually projected to have as many as 972 residential units.

Beulah Park will have a new and more direct connection to the Town Center area.

Columbus Street will be extended connecting the new development into the old town area. Trails through the area are in place and a popular destination with many bikers and walkers.

Before the Grove City became a center for both greyhound and thoroughbred racing in the 1930s, it was just another sleepy, farm community. On race days, it wasn't unusual for the population to double and triple in size as visitors by car and Interurban.

For a few years though, the Beulah Park name was lost and this didn't sit well with much of the racing community, especially those who lived in Central Ohio.

For several years, the track operated as Darby Downs but there was no giving up on the Beulah name. It made a strong return in the 1970s.

There was one person who was responsible for the success at the park. That individual was Robert J. Dienst, a Columbus contractor, who loved to mingle with race fans, jockeys and horse owners.

Have You
Visited Lately?

www.grovecityohhistory.org

CCL President Said Parents ‘Feared Aging’

A 1963 article in *the Grove City Record* by Margie Breckenridge quoted Mrs. Donald (Jeanette) Myers as saying many parents of that era were afraid of growing up.

At the time, Myers was the youngest woman to ever serve as president of Ohio’s Child Conservation League. She and her husband made their home on Franklin Avenue in Grove City.

“Many adults today are anxious to stay young and so afraid of the advancing years that they end up holding themselves to the maturity level of their youngsters,” Myers was quoted.

Myers, also the first woman elected to Grove City Council, continued saying that children are confused because their parents are also confused.

“Teenagers are not mature. They may protest loudly, but deep down they know they need firmness from their parents.”

She continued saying too many parents leave their youngsters to their own resources in the mistaken believe teens are mature enough to handle themselves without adult guidance.

First Grove City Museum Inside Civic Drive Home

Few people know Grove City’s very first museum was located in a private home located on Civic Drive in the Grove City Town Center. That was in the mid-1970s.

Mayor Ike Stage, in a recent conversation, recalled the efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Good who set aside a room in their home for what was called the Grove City Relic Museum.

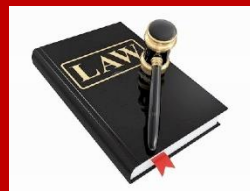
Stage said he remembered they had a large collection of Indian arrow heads from the area around Stringtown Road which is believed to be once a Native American trail from the Scioto River.

Some of the objects they had in eight showcases included the tooth of a woolly mammoth found in Florida. Some of the other items in their collection included crude stone tools, pottery, tomahawks, hammers, fish hooks, spears, rocks, minerals and other items.

While most of their collection was from Ohio and Kentucky, other relics were provided by friends who lived in Arkansas, Missouri and Arizona.

Neither Mr. or Mrs. Good had any formal training in archaeology but both served several terms on the board of trustees of the Archaeological Society of Ohio. Their efforts were recognized by many national museums including the Smithsonian Institute.

It’s The



Take a few minutes to review laws created by the early residents of Grove City. Looking at the past is like the opening of a window into our past.

IT’S THE LAW: In 1900, it became necessary for the Grove City Village Council to pass an ordinance that said: “Whoever shall ride or drive any horse, mule or other animal, or drive any vehicle upon any sidewalk in the Village of Grove City, Ohio, or suffer any horse or other animal to stand thereon, shall, on conviction thereof, be fined in any sum not to exceed ten dollars.”

IT’S THE LAW: In 1868, Grove City’s Village Council passed an ordinance that said any person who leaves a dead horse, cow, hog, sheep or other animal within the corporation and doesn’t remove it after notification by the town marshal, a fine of not more than ten dollars can be imposed or the individual could be jailed for not less than six hours.

IT’S THE LAW: In 1868, the Grove City Village Council decided that if a fine or the cost of prosecution wasn’t paid, that individual or individuals could be confined in the jail until the fine was paid in full or otherwise discharged by due process of law.

IT’S THE LAW: A town marshal in Grove City could be fined not more than twenty dollars if he failed to keep a strict watch at reasonable hours over turbulent and disorderly persons.

IT’S THE LAW: On May 25, 1868, the Village of Grove City passed an ordinance that prohibits unchaste or lewd entertainment or houses of prostitution. Any person so convicted could be fined not less than ten dollars plus costs not exceeding fifty dollars for each offense. That person was also to be imprisoned not less than five days and not more than 10 days.

IT’S THE LAW: Did you know it was illegal to slaughter an animal in the street or alley within the village and then throw any “filth” into the street that causing a stench? Violators were fined not less than \$1 or more than \$5 for such violations. This was law in 1868, two years after Grove City was incorporated as a village.

Grant-Sawyer Home Now Has New Fee Structure

While the \$5 adult fee to tour the Grant-Sawyer Home remains the same, a \$1 charge is now in place for children 5-12 years of age. Children 4 years old and under are admitted without charge, according to Linda Lewis.

There is now a notebook listing the furniture room by room, she said. The notebook identifies items that belonged to Ruth Jividen and lists other items that were locally donated or purchased.

Grove City Bus Service Was Established In 1922

The oldest passenger bus service between Grove City and Columbus began operation in 1922. Until around 1928, it was in competition with the Interurban which carried passengers along Rt. 62/3.

The company motto was "Modern Methods for Modern Days" and they claimed to provide 20-minute service during what was described as rush hour.

The Columbus-Grove City Bus Co. operated out of offices on Parsons Avenue and riders could telephone GARfield 5666 for scheduling information.

Buses operated between Columbus and Grove City on the hour throughout the day. The company promised courteous treatment followed up with speed, safety and comfort.

Another company also served Grove City known as the Midwest Transportation Company.

It's unclear if Midwest bus service was just between Columbus and Grove City or if they provided bus services throughout the Midwest with a stop in Grove City.

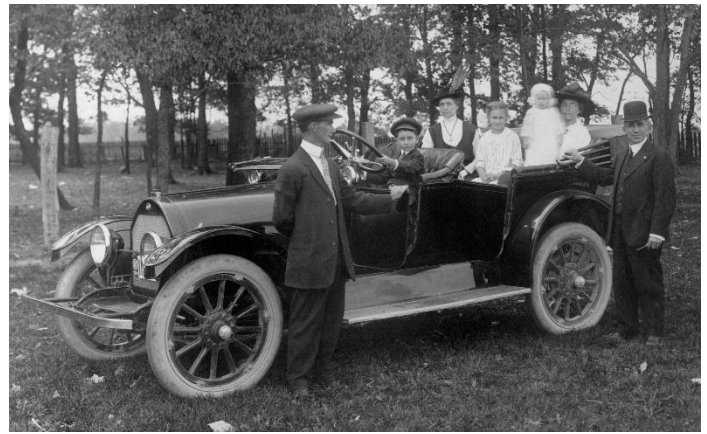
Have A Newsletter Story Idea? Submit It By Mail or E-Mail

Everyone has a story to tell and members should consider sharing theirs in a future newsletter.

Please submit it to the Southwest Pioneer at 3378 Park St., Grove City, OH 43123 or at jhale45@gmail.com. If you need help writing the story we can help. The next quarterly newsletter is June 2020.

Renewed Your Annual Membership?

It's not too late to renew your annual membership for 2020. Contact Janet Garza, 614-991-4712 if you need assistance or email jhale45@gmail.com and a renewal membership form will be sent electronically.



Motoring to Beulah Park is the caption under this historic photograph but there is no other information. Does anyone recognize any of the people and have knowledge that can be included? Please contact Jim Hale, 614-875-9560.

Rotary Seeks Nominations For 2020 Service Award

The Grove City Rotary Club is seeking nominations for the annual Service Above Self Award. The deadline to submit a nomination is April 6.

Nominees must meet one or more of the following requirements and be outstanding in the field of education, fighting disease, the local community, saving mothers and children, the environment or promoting peace.



Individuals selected will have a plaque installed on the Park Street side of the municipal building. Nomination forms are available at the Grove City Welcome Center and Museum, 3378 Park St.

Tim McComb was the 2019 inductee. Society Member Dr. Leslie Bostic was the first and Sherol Saxton Mulligan was the second person so honored.

Check out **YOUR** website

www.grovecityohhistory.org

It's a great way to explore and learn more about Grove City's rich history.

HEADLINES: years ago

Grove City Blade, 1897

Will Sibray again assumed duties at the Grove City station manager.

Marion Kegg opened a grocery store and promised fresh vegetables and a full line of groceries.

Grove City beat the Columbus Reds 11-10 in a baseball game but lost the next day 13-9 to Mt. Sterling.

Village Council ordered the ditch from Barbee's Run to the corner to the Hoelcher property to be cleaned at once.

William Eckles was appointed deputy marshal while Marshal Stage was ill at home.

St. John's Lutheran Church membership approved without a dissenting vote to purchase a new organ.

The Grove City Record, 1933

Kingdom Theatre opened with a new sound system that provided a softer acoustical sound for the movie, *The Devil is Driving*.

Grove City, with a population of 1,700, received a \$12,000 federal grant for a sanitary sewer project. All labor came from the ranks of the unemployed men in Jackson Township and Grove City.

E. A. Baldwin, station manager for the B&O in Grove City left for a similar position in Columbus.

The Ohio Senate approved a bill that temporarily allowed betting again at the Grove City Greyhound track.

Society's Facebook Grew By 14% In 2019

Interest in the Society's Facebook increased by 14% in 2019, according to Mark Schmidbauer, the chair of the website committee. That was an increase 169 followers that included residents from 11 states outside Ohio.

Schmidbauer also reported that one Facebook post has a reach of over 4,000 and two posts reaching over 3,000.

People using the website has increased by 2,600 since 2017. Last year alone, over 8,200 users were logged onto the website. Most people who visited the site used a search engine and while 33% made a direct approach using the website name.

Web visitors logged in from all 50 states including Washington, D.C. Users from 51 countries also visited the site. A total of 391 people logged onto audio stories. The top four included the William Breck Story, Steve Jackson's WOSU Radio interview, Woollyburger Cemetery and the Hugh Grant Story.

A total of 675 students and 90 adults participated in field trips last year to Grove City historical sites.

For those of you who are interested, there are two changes from the posted info on events later this year:

- Nov. 10, not Nov. 3, will be the regular monthly meeting due to the Presidential election.
- The Christmas Tour scheduled for Dec. 5 will be held from 2-6 pm, not 12-4 pm.

The website will also be updated with this info.

Consider Ohio History Fund When Filing Tax Return

Donations, especially through the Ohio History Fund tax check-off on the state income tax form, helps create local history projects.

The Ohio History Fund is the state's only competitive matching grant program exclusively for history projects.

There's only one challenge: the grants are made from money donated to the Ohio History Connection, so the money that the History Fund has to grant fluctuates from year to year.

The more donations the History Fund receives, the more and larger grants the History Fund can make. Case in point: in 2018, the History Fund had \$76,000 and in 2019, it had \$90,000.

Half of the History Fund's 73 recipients are Alliance members, such as the Society, and as a group, they have received more than \$330,000 in grants.

Although called a "check-off," there is no box to check. Toward the end of your individual Ohio state income tax and after you've calculated the amount of your refund look for line 26 that asks "Amount of line 24 to be donated."

One of the six options is "Ohio History Fund," line 26f under "Ohio History Fund," fill in the amount that you'd like to contribute.

Last year's average contribution was just over \$9, so even a small donation can make a big difference. Since 2013, the fund has made 73 grants totaling \$694,569 to support local history.

The Southwest Franklin County Historical Society is a member of Ohio's Alliance program and is eligible to apply for grants.

Why Is There A Society \$9 Fee To Mail Quarterly Newsletters?

Why should Society members pay extra to receive a quarterly newsletter by mail? The reason is to make certain funds are not taken from the general fund.

The cost to print, fold an 8-page newsletter is \$1.58, postage is 70 cents and the printed envelope is 3 cents which totals \$2.31. Multiply that by four issues and the cost for the year is \$9.24.

Society's Plans Projected For Next Five Years

By Steve Jackson

A committee of members has worked diligently reviewing and updating the Society's five-year plan that was first completed in January 2018.

It's important that we examine the past, present and future of the organization in an effort to best preserve and promote the history with which we are responsible.

The organizations' plans follows.

2018 - 2019

1. Complete renovation of railroad station. 2018 Capital Budget Appropriation. Once the station is moved to the Village, the SWFCHS will begin and complete a majority of the renovation of the inside of the station. There are several local train local craftsman interested in assisting with renovations.
2. Exterior completed by City, painted by Society, 2019.
3. Complete Grant Sawyer Carriage House, Visitor Center Renovation, Grant Sawyer Barn instead of Carriage House.
4. Carriage House will serve dual purposes. The first will be as a visitor staging area and information center on the first floor. Since the House is not accessible for people with mobility issues, we will use that area to create a virtual tour with TVs and informational videos. Creating this area will also allow large tours groups to be accommodated by using the area as pre and post tour staging area. The second purpose will be the upstairs. This will be renovated to portray a house as an extra sleeping area and farm office from the time period.
5. Chinking Jones Barn at Village - 2018 Capital Budget Appropriation - COMPLETED. Stellar Construction has started and in the process of completing this before June 2 event
6. Remodel and Refurbish Sam's Garden, 2018 Partnership with Gardens at Gantz Farm Volunteers. Funding received from Historical Commission. COMPLETED with exception of new signage.
7. Inventory all sites - in progress, working with Historical Commission to find inventory system that will work for all sites
8. Create "Young Historians" Junior Historical Group, operating but not active. Funded by a \$2,500 grant. Scholarship opportunity for high school students who are interested in history career
9. Upgrade and Expand Pathways at Village
10. Move Bicentennial Barn (Jackson Township) to serve as new Visitor Center at Century Village.

2020 - 2021

1. Complete reconstruction of Bicentennial Barn.
2. Begin Phase 1 of Restoration of Grant Sawyer Home Barn. COMPLETED with City Capital.
3. Chinking the Keg House, 2020 capital appropriation.
4. Move and restore the Worthington Root Cellar, owned legally with documentation, advised this move and construction must be funded by them before adding it to the village. City will have final approval.

5. Renew SWFCHS Publications Program, working on rebranding the logo, tri-fold brochure creation.
6. Reestablish Oral History Project with new equipment and recoding methods.
7. Create online registrations for tours off SWFCHS website.
8. Plan and organize 10-year anniversary celebration of museum.
9. Research and create signage verbiage for Grant Barn, Depot, and Farm Museum.
10. Review and updating policy and procedure society.
11. Increase visibility at local events with booths and literature.
12. Increase the level of visibility to the online resources for the society.
13. Create a local history spot on social media on a regular basis using more "modern" history of Grove City and the townships.

2022 - 2023

1. Chinking Blacksmith Shop
2. Continue Phase 2 Restoration of Grant Sawyer Barn - COMPLETED in 2019
3. Expand and upgrade parking at village. Close gravel parking lot off Orders road and convert to Century Village Green.
4. Build Bandstand for Century Village.
5. Begin "Church at the Village" Project.
6. Create new five-year plan for 2024-2029
7. Create and expand outreach to other historical societies and residents of the four townships.
8. Research and plan installation of a one or two acres of native prairie at village.

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 p.m.

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

Public is Invited to Attend

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual Member	\$15	Annual Student	\$1
Annual Business	\$50	Life Member	\$150

All Newsletters Sent Free by Email

Newsletters Mailed Require a \$9 Annual Fee