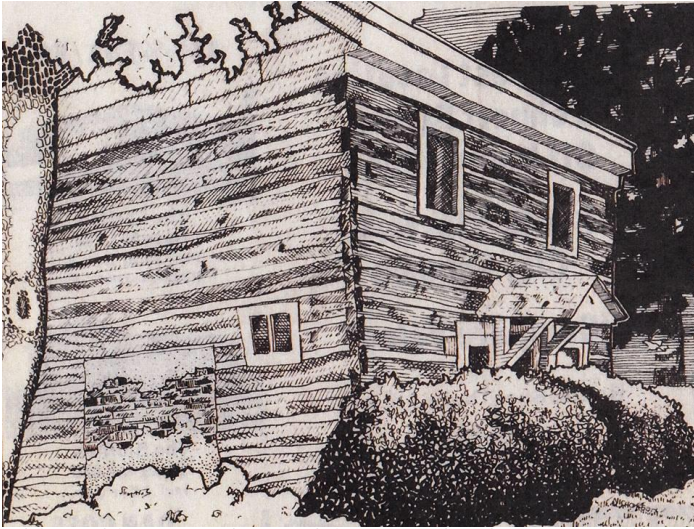


SOUTHWEST PIONEER

JUNE 2020

SOUTHWEST FRANKLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

3378-B PARK STREET, GROVE CITY, OHIO 43123 614-277-3061 grovecityohhistory@gmail.com



This cabin, once located just north of Georgesville on Gardiner Road, was built in 1803, the same year Ohio became a state according to research by Earl Nicholson. Georgesville was settled in 1797, the same year Franklinton became a settlement. Both Georgesville and Franklinton are considered to be the first permanent white settlements in Central Ohio.

Business Owners 100 Plus Years Ago

There once was a wide range of businesses in Grove City. Most are forgotten in time and haven't received the important role they played in the community.

Not all are listed here but a few that have been remembered include:

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

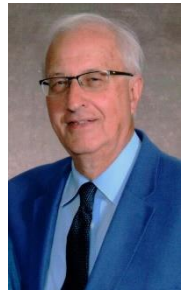
Men by the name of Green and Barbee operated a cigar factory; Mrs. S. E. Johnson was a dealer in wallpaper; and Weygandt and Kalklosch were undertakers. Kalklosch was also a local furniture dealer.

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

Continued page 8

Jackson Honored By Local Rotary; Plaque On Wall

Steven D. Jackson has been selected the 2020 Grove City Service Above Self Award winner according to an announcement by the Grove City Rotary Club.



A plaque will be placed on the Grove City Municipal Building Park Street wall honoring his achievements. Jackson was nominated for the award by Janet Shailer. The plaque, which will have a story and a likeness of him, will join others on the wall of honor. His story reads:

Steven D. Jackson, a lifelong Grove City resident, has never sought recognition for his volunteer efforts, especially those involving the preservation of local history. He is proud of his community, the place he calls home. As a long-serving president of the local historical society, Steve was instrumental in the restoration of the historic one-room Orders School and the creation of Century Village. He helped open Grove City's museum in the Town Center and the 1840 era Grant-Sawyer Home where he serves as a docent. He has helped plan and execute many historical activities in Grove City which has also contributed to the city's tourism effort. Steve earned a master's degree at The Ohio State University and taught English and history at Madison-Plains High School until his retirement in 2017. He is a member and past president of that school's scholarship foundation. Steve is a member and supporter of numerous state and national preservation and historical organizations. Steve's volunteer hours have helped create an environment that has encouraged and promoted a renewed interest in the history of Grove City and Jackson Township. He is also proud to be a direct descendent of the pioneer Jonas Orders family.



Can You ID Photos In June Newsletter?

This month, take time to look through the June newsletter and see if you can identify the photographs without captions.

It's simple and should be fun. How many buildings and sites can you recognize in the Grove City Town Center? That's where all the pictures have been taken.

All you need to do is write down the newsletter's page number and identify the photos without captions. Email your name and phone with your entry to jhale45@gmail.com. A random drawing will be held for a surprise gift.

Take an afternoon and drive around the Town Center and identify the pictures. It's something you can do to get out of the house.



ARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES UP-TO-DATE?

If not, please see Page 8 for details.

Would you like a printed copy?

For an additional \$9 fee, it can be mailed.

Kingdom Movie Theatre Memories Are Retold

This article originally appeared in the Southwest Messenger when Alice Litchfield reminisced about her childhood and the old Kingdom Theatre in Grove City's downtown. The theatre today is home for the Little Theatre Off Broadway.

Our Grove City was just a small village when, as just a very young girl, I enjoyed Saturday afternoon movies at the old Kingdom Theatre.

As I grew older, I often wondered how such a small community could have supported such a movie house. We were really hooked on the exciting one-reel serials and westerns.

We would watch open-mouthed, dreading the moment when the words "To Be Continued" would flash across the screen, always at a very exciting moment.

Remember Ethel King, the blind daughter of the owner?

She pounded away at the old piano; the sound that carried those exciting movie scenes to their highest point of excitement or slowed down for romantic or serious moments? Now there was a lady who as years passed, I grew to have a great pride in and admired more than anyone I knew.

Ethel King married my uncle Frank Clemons. Her vision at that time was so slight, and in a few years she was to lose even that. She wrote two pieces of sheet music and had them published.

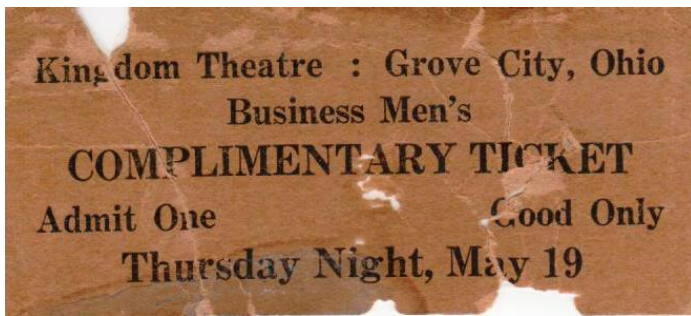
But to go back to our Saturday afternoons at the Kingdom Theatre, I'll bet there are three men still living in this town that will remember this scene.

Myself and two other girl friends were sitting together and on the screen was showing one of those Murder Mystery serials that were popular then.

In it was a scene where a girl lay sleeping, and you could still just make out a menacing hand approaching her. At this time some boys sitting behind us slowly passed a hand right beside our heads moving their fingers menacingly like on the screen.

Everyone in the theatre was very quiet and as their fingers came into view we each let out a wild, hysterical scream. Of course, the boys howled with laughter as did most everyone else. It was quite some time before we girls thought it was fun.

Continued on Page 3



Kingdom Theatre *Continued from Page 2*

Ah, would I like to sit once again in that old theatre and see some of those old musicals and westerns!

It was a great fantasy world to enter on those long ago Saturday afternoons.

I remember the first version of Babes in Toyland which was made with Laurel and Hardy.



Can you identify the five pictures on Pages 2, 3?

Contest Winner

Central Crossing Student Writes About Experiences

By Asma Mohamoud

Asma, a student at Central Crossing High School, entered our historical writing contest and was selected as one of three winners. She received a \$100 gift for her story. It's reprinted below in full.

I was born in the United Arab Emirates but was raised in Pakistan, so a chunk of my childhood was spent in Pakistan.

When I came to Cleveland, Ohio at the age of 9, I experienced a massive cultural shock. In Pakistan, where there is a large majority of the

Muslim population and so their music, culture, food, and language became the norm for me.

Here in America, I was surrounded by diversity in all sorts of ways, shapes, and forms. Soon, I began to live a different lifestyle and transition to another form of living. It was quite difficult but great things came with it.

I became more open-minded and was eager to try new things that I wasn't accustomed to; even though I was a little timid but that ambition hadn't left me.

A few months later we moved to Columbus and I eventually started middle school. Now for most people, middle school was a nightmare, fortunately for me, it was the start of an adventure. Math has always been a challenge but I have learned to manage through countless studies and support from my teachers.

Art class was the best. I would grab a pencil and draw to the best of my ability. Trying to impress my classmates; of course, they were fascinated. After all, I was the best artist in my school.

Last year, my 10th-grade year was when I officially broke out of my shell and involved myself with school activities. I joined Key Club International, it is a student-led organization that encourages leadership through serving and volunteering. Once I joined, I was committed to improving my social skills and myself overall.

My favorite involvement was the walk for the March of Dimes-the walk for babies and their mothers. It was a great experience, there were hundreds of people marching along with our club members. I saw thousands of smiles and laughter, that calmed my heart.

Smiling is a good deed, and you never know whom that smile could affect. Another one of my favorite volunteering I did was when I went to the United Methodist Church in Grove City. I served breakfast to the elders and the young children that came, I interacted with the children and chatted with the elders.

It was an interesting experience that made me step out of my shell and I was delighted with my choice because helping hands welcome smiles and gratitude. I hope to continue to educate myself and to further myself into attempting new things. *Continued Page 4*

Central Crossing Student

Continued from Page 3

When I graduate from high school, I plan on majoring in the education field and become a preschool or an elementary school teacher. I believe educating young children is essential because they need to develop intellectually and professionally to become the leaders of their generation.

I am in a South-Western City Schools District program called Early Childhood Education. I am a preschool assistant and experience what it is like to guide children to success. I also learn about the importance, consequences and the necessities that a preschool teacher needs or holds. After high school, I will have my CDA license and work as a preschool assistant teacher while I am studying to get my bachelor's degree at Ohio State University. I generally love working and interacting with children, they are curious and are fast-learners, which is why I want to teach them.

Education holds a deep connection for me, parents have sacrificed their lives for their children to obtain a proper education and become thriving.

Not all children and adults receive or received education so we need to appreciate what we are given and learn to share it in different ways.

Have Your Visited?

If you haven't visited the Society website lately you may be missing our "new look" and additional content. We have a new sponsor, the Red Roof Inn in Grove City.

You'll also find information about scheduling tours at various historical sites although most are temporarily closed because of the coronavirus.

There's also a new section on Stories of Interest. This will be greatly expanded over the upcoming year so you should check back frequently.

We are currently accessing the audio stories on Breck, Grant and Woolyburger Cemetery. Have you listened the audio stories?

www.grovecityhistory.org

HISTORY Dateline

By Jim Hale



Sewer Creates New Suburb

Oh, the good old days, or were they?

It might be hard for many to recall, but Grove City didn't have a sanitary sewer system until 1937. Up until then, when an inside toilet flushed or water drained from a sink, it went into a septic system or cesspool on the homeowner's lot. Odor and contamination were common.

Many of the homes had a leach field that drained into open ditches along the streets. An article in the Grove City Record described the situation as creating offensive odors and objectionable conditions. Adding to the problem, the ditches frequently became stagnate. Crews from the county had to come into town to clear street side ditches allowing the waste water to move quicker.

Health Department officials described the situation "deplorable" and pointed out the potential for an outbreak of typhoid fever.

What created the problem?

Around 1922, the village took a major step forward. It built a water purification plant, dug a well and constructed a water tower at the present site of Windsor Park.

To complete the effort, the village installed water lines to residential homes. That was a positive, but it also created an unexpected problem.

Municipal water flowing freely into homes also created more outflow. In turn, more liquid was leaving the house than what the household septic systems weren't built to accommodate.

The result, stagnant and odorous open ditches.

The problem would not have existed if the village had installed both water lines and a sewage system in the early 1920s, but as often was the case, it was one step at a time because of municipal revenue.

The urgency came to a head when a Grove City resident threatened to sue the village because of the open ditches and unhealthy conditions.

Continued on Page 5

HISTORY DATELINE

Continued from Page 4

In January 1936, a \$25,000 bond issue was being discussed by village council to pay the village share of a sewage treatment plant and installation of sewage tile.

The bond issue was approved by voters and the community got behind the project. Over 100 property owners contributed to the project allowing the village to secure easements.

That wouldn't be the entire cost though. Since the village was able to use Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers, the village was only obligated for one fifth of the \$263,000 projected cost. The contract also provided that village and township residents would have the first employment opportunities. Workers received \$65 in monthly wages.

A location for the sewage treatment plant was on property owned by Benjamin Ziner. The village purchased 1.6 acres on Hoover Road for \$1,600. The site was just north of the current Jackson Township Administrative building.

The main sewer lines would include 18-inch pipe and eight-inch pipe in residential areas. In September, a record 3,420 feet of sewer pipe was laid in five days; by October, 29,000 feet had been placed in the ground with only 19,000 feet remaining.

One of the major projects was drilling a tunnel under the B&O Railroad tracks.

The entire project was finished in 1937 and the sewage plant opened June 3, 1937. Now, with both water and sewage treatment plants in operation, residents were told to expect the village to nearly double in size.

Grove City was then recognized as a suburban community.

When Normal Returns

When we get back to normal routines and the Society resumes meetings, don't forget to ask a friend, neighbor or a relative to join as a Society member.

For any organization to survive, new faces are always important. When you see someone at a meeting you don't know, be the first to greet and welcome. It benefits us all.

Johnston's Home Now 'Beulah Abbey'

The brick house at the southeast corner of Columbus Street and Arbutus Avenue, once identified as 71 Columbus Street, was the early home of the Silas Everett and Evaline Higgy Johnston family in 1907.

Randolph Higgy once lived in a house that occupied the site where the former Johnston house sits today. Many prominent families were neighbors of Higgy and his family including Dr. Joseph Bullen, Grove City's first physician, and the Adam G. Grant family.

In 2019, a restoration project at 3299 Columbus Street, was underway by new owners, Larry and Mary Titus. In the process, the historic home was named Beulah Abbey.

"We have always named our homes. Our loft in Sandusky is Parrottdise, but a Parrot theme does not work here. We sat on the porch one evening enjoying the view and Mary typed in: 'What was the most popular girl names from 1907?' Beulah and Abigail were the top two. It was almost like the house named itself, so Beulah Abbey it is," Larry said.

Silas, who preferred his middle name of Everett, was born in Fairfield County, Sept. 13, 1860 and attended school in Bremen.

After earning a degree at Ada College at Bremen, he worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1884, at the age of 24, he moved to Grove City to teach school, and a few years later, in 1887, he left education to enter the business world selling coal. His venture was very successful.

Everett married Evaline, daughter of Randolph and Catherine Grant Higgy, June 22, 1887, at Grove City. The Higgy's were another early Grove City pioneer family.

Continued on Page 6



Beulah Abbey

Continued from Page 5

Everett and Evaline were parents of two children, Helen I. and Orie Marie. The family attended the Grove City Presbyterian Church.

Johnston's coal business caught the attention of Adam G. Grant. The two men reached an agreement that allowed Grant to purchase a half interest in Johnston's coal business. The new business was renamed the firm of S. E. Johnson and Adam G. Grant. Under that name, the two men purchased Grove City's first lumberyard which was located at Park Street and the railroad tracks.

Their business became Johnston and Grant and the two acquired an old warehouse building at Grant Avenue near the B&O tracks. Leaving the sawmill property where it was on Park Street, they constructed two grain elevators at the newly purchased site. Johnston and Grant expanded becoming dealers, not only in lumber, but in hay, grain, coal, various construction supplies and other equipment.

Mr. Johnston remained in the business 45 years. He was also active in community affairs and was a charter member of the local chapters of Masons, Knights of Pythias and the International Order of Odd Fellows.

He also served on Grove City village council, as mayor, and various other village and township responsibilities. In 1893, while Johnston was mayor, the first municipal building and jail were erected on Park Street.

The earliest property search uncovered by Stephen Smith found on April 11, 1920, S. E. Johnson was still owner of the property although the house predates 1920.

On Nov. 13, 1933 the property was transferred to Evaline then on April 22, 1940 to Helen I. Johnston, a daughter. David J. and Bobbie I. Thomas were listed as owners Sept. 4, 1963, then it was transferred June 30, 1997 to Bobbie I. Thomas.

Lakeview School Site One Of Many Identified

An effort is underway by the Society to identify as many of the old one room schools in the area as possible.

One of them is the old Lakeview School. This is a good time to view the structure because it is frequently hidden by crops.

"It was called the Lakeview School due to the fact that just to the southeast lies a lake, now in the Southeast Conservation Club tract," according to Steve Jackson.

The school was built in the 1870-1890 period, according to Jackson's father.

Jackson said he had a vague memory of another school house that stood at the corner of Stringtown Road and SR 104. He said he thought that building was called Evergreen School.

Lottie Woda was one Grove City resident who taught in a one room school. A teacher's job included more than instruction. She was required to do her own custodial work after the kids went home. That included cleaning the wood floors and stoking the coal furnace each morning.

She also recalled that many early teachers became old maids because a female school teacher wasn't allowed to be married. Woda started teaching in 1919 when she was 18.

Tidbits of History

Do you have a story or memory to share? Email your memory to jhale45@gmail.com for consideration

Timothy Eyerman sent this memory along for the membership. "I found the story about the great 1913 flood interesting. My father told the story of his experience with the flood many times but nothing about the 1918 pandemic leaving me to believe that for him, it was a more traumatic event.

He would have been 10 years old at the time and our family, like many others from the Grove City area, "stood Market" in Columbus once a week. My grandfather, Edward Eyerman, drove a wagon with a two-horse hitch to carry the produce, dairy products and meat that he would sell there.

He took my father, Walter Eyerman, along that day to keep him company. As was his tradition, he and my dad had lunch that day at a near-by tavern as the rains were increasing at a menacing rate. Shortly after they finished lunch, he decided that it was time to get out of there while he could.

They hastily loaded up the wagon and headed for the bridge crossing the Scioto.

Continued on Page 7

TIDBITS of HISTORY

Continued from Page 6

As they approached the bridge, he observed the water lapping away at the bottom of the bridge.

After a very brief prayer, he whipped the horses and they raced across the bridge with just minutes to spare.

Grove City had two service stations in the downtown area. One was the **Capitol City Oil Company** that sold Indian Red Gasoline in 1928 and another was the **O. G. Ranke** Station selling Texaco's Fire Chief gasoline in 1935. It's also interesting to note that Texaco provided Ranke with flower boxes and shrubs to showcase his business.

Also, in 1935, a considerable amount of **counterfeit \$10 bills and coins** were in circulation. The coins, quarters, dimes and nickels were stamped on one side and frequently used in slot machines. The coins, made of soft lead, created problems for merchants and bankers.

Continued on Page 6

In addition, a number of daytime robberies of slot machines occurred in Grove City, Orient, Pleasant Corners and Miller's Station.

If you are reading this article, do me a favor. Send me an email jhale45@gmail.com or mail a note to 3378-B Park St., Grove City 43123 and let me know you are reading the newsletter. Also, **tell me what you read** and what you would like to see more of in the quarterly newsletter. We receive little to no response to it and just wonder about its value to members.

A state arson investigator determined a June 1953 fire at **Beulah Park**, which caused \$52,000 in damages and suffocated 16 thoroughbreds and a pony, was accidental and blamed on defective wiring.

Also in 1953, WRFD Radio interviewed Howard Sigman as part of their *Good Old Days* segment. Sigman, owner of the **Red and White** grocery store, was honored for his "forward-looking" business strategy. He had just incorporated his store in June of that year.

After 20 seasons of theatrical productions, the **Prairie Players Community Theatre**

announced it would cease operations in April, 1979.

That same year, **Jackson Township Trustees** were trying to determine who had purchased \$1,400 in paint from a north Columbus Sherwin-Williams store.

Did You Know?

U.S. Post Office Once Mailed 'Children'

This never happened in our area that we know of but it did happen in Ohio and other states.

Believe it or not, children could be mailed through the post office until 1920, according to a



story once published in the Wall Street Journal. The child had to be under 50 pounds and postage stamps had to be affixed to their clothing. It was cheaper for people to ship children than to put them on a train by themselves.

Children would ride in the mail car and were watched and fed by mail clerks. The record distance was a 700 mile trip from Florida to Virginia for 15 cents in postage stamps.

'Belling' For Newlyweds

Many everyday practices of old would hardly be acceptable today. One in particular was the common practice of belling.

After a couple married, neighbors and friends would go to the newlywed's house late in the evening being very quiet and they would wait for the lights to be turned off.

Then on a signal from the organizer, the crowd would make as much noise as possible by shooting off guns, banging on metal and some would use a horse fiddle, a device placed against one of the house doors and when cranked it would give off a loud ratchet sound. All of these activities were aimed at getting the couple up and awake. The noise would cease when the newly married couple opened. The revelers always brought along plenty of food and party items.



This photo first appeared in the June 2012 newsletter with a request to identify the young lady. There were no responses so we thought we might try again. If you know who she is, please email grovecityhistory@gmail.com.

Business Owners 100 Years Ago

Continued from Page 1

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

Franklin Township Retained Its Name

Looking back in the early history of Franklin County, it's interesting to note of the four first townships, Franklin Township is the only one to retain its original name.

There was a time when Franklin Township was larger than the current boundaries of Franklin County.

The first permanent white settlements in Central Ohio occurred in 1797. Most people are aware of Franklinton but few recall Georgesville was also settled that same year.

Early on, Franklinton residents lived close to Native American settlements along the Scioto River. Those tribes included the Wyandot, Delaware, Mingo and Shawnee tribes.

Franklin Township started to shrink in size in 1815 when Jackson Township was formed and again in 1819 when Prairie Township was organized. In 1900, Franklinton was absorbed into the City of Columbus.

Religious services were common and camp meetings were frequently held at the old Union church in Briggsdale.

A.G. Grant, of Grove City, recalled one of those camp meetings and said he remembered one Sunday morning during a camp meeting nine large Indians bedecked with their feathers and war paint, walked up to front seats and sat down.

"Their presence naturally caused a commotion, but there was no disturbance," Grant was said to have commented.

SOUTHWEST PIONEER

PUBLISHED MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER

Southwest Franklin County Historical Society

A 501C3 NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

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



grovecityohhistory@gmail.com

JAMES F. HALE, Newsletter Editor

614-875-9560 – jhale45@gmail.com

Steve Jackson, President 614-871-0081

John Hines, Vice President 614-364-6692

Trudie Gardner, Secretary 614-879-7416

Larry Zapp, Treasurer 614-475-4018

Janet Garza, Membership 614-991-4712

MONTHLY SOCIETY MEETINGS

Monthly Meetings first Tuesday at 7 p.m.

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

MEETINGS TEMPORARILY POSTPONED

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