



# SOUTHWEST PIONEER

SEPTEMBER 2021

*Newsletter Only Available Online*

SOUTHWEST FRANKLIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

3378-B PARK ST., GROVE CITY, OHIO 43123



## Historical Marker

*If you haven't visited the former Beulah Park area recently you may be in for a surprise. The heritage of Ohio's first thoroughbred race track is well preserved amid the new homes in the area.*

## Little Known About Township Constable

Little is known about how long Jackson Township elected constables. Mabel Davis provided information about William Henry Davis who was elected to the position around 1911.

He was born in Jackson County in 1866, and died in Pickaway County in 1925.

According to Mrs. Davis, he lived on Grant Avenue with his wife, Mary Etta Wilks, and son, Hershel, according to the 1910 census. His principal job was a railroad laborer.



Mrs. Davis had a document signed by C. N. Graul, township clerk, dated Nov. 11, 1911.

It read:

*"To Wm Davis. You will take notice that on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of November 1911 at an election of*

*Jackson Township, Franklin Co. you were respectively elected by the electors of said township to the office of constable. You are required to appear before the undersigned on the 15 day of November at 2 o'clock p.m. at the township hall to give the necessary bond."*

William Henry was Mrs. Davis' grandfather.

According to an article in the Grove City Record dated 1934, Jackson Township had two constables: Harry Clemons and Lawrence DeVault. There was a mention in that same story that A. L. Willing was the Grove City police chief.

## Franklin Township Has New History, Pictures

The historical society has completed a revision of the history as it pertains to Franklin Township. The new information and photographs will soon be available to view online at [www.grovecityohhistory.org](http://www.grovecityohhistory.org).



## Historic Home

*A number of existing older homes in Grove City were built during the Civil War era. One stands beside the Grove City Public Library on Grant Avenue. According to the late Earl R. Nicholson, local historian and public official, the private residence at 3407 Grant Ave. was built just after the Civil War, making it one of the oldest residential houses still standing in Grove City Town Center.*

## Harrisburg: Stage Stopped There For Fresh Horses

Harrisburg, just south of Grove City on the Franklin and Pickaway counties boundaries, was once a place where stagecoaches stopped for fresh horses.

The stagecoach destination was originally called White Hall, later known as the United States Hotel operated by John P. Bolin, proprietor.

A trip from Cincinnati to Columbus took nine-and-one half hours by stage.

There was one other hotel in Harrisburg known as the National House also on Columbus Street, operated by Samuel Hill according to a history of the village compiled by Ruth Wallace.

**The old building**, once located at High and Columbus streets, burned in 1915. There is no record when it was first constructed. According to Ms. Wallace, in 1906 a portion of the second floor was converted into a dance hall operated by the Wild Rose Club and later as a meeting place for the Court of Honor.

At street level, the building housed a general store. In a lower east room, Smith and Norris operated a furniture store which later became the J. E. Norris Furniture Store. Norris later became Harrisburg's first funeral home director and he later opened a funeral home in Grove City. That business today is known as the Schoedinger Norris Funeral Home.

**Harrisburg dates** to 1799 when Thomas and Elijah Chenoweth settled the area moving from Pike County. They were originally from Maryland. Each man purchased 200 acres, land that would eventually become the Village of Harrisburg. A plat was prepared in 1836 and the community was named Harrisburg.

The village wasn't chartered until July 12, 1851, one year before Grove City was platted by William Breck. Grove City became a chartered village in 1866.

The Chenoweth families were soon joined by families by the name of Foster and Kerr. The early settlers were strict followers of John Wesley's early Methodist Church. The first religious services were held in Thomas Chenoweth's log cabin soon after they settled and constructed homes on their new land.

*Source: History of Harrisburg, Ohio  
Reprinted from Southwest Franklin County  
Historical Society Newsletter, June 2014*



### Water Powered Vehicle

Grove City resident Stanley A. Meyer became a national celebrity in the late 1990s for his claim of creating a water fuel cell vehicle that operated without gasoline. His claims were never accepted by the scientific community. He died in 1998 and a Grove City Police investigation accepted the Franklin County Coroner's ruling that Meyer's death was by natural cause.



## Bostic Created Boys Ranch

Buckeye Boys Ranch, today simply The Buckeye Ranch, opened in 1961 with Dr. Leslie Bostic as the executive director. It was originally one residential facility that housed 10 boys; today serves as many as 3,000 boys and girls.

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PUBLISHED MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER

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Southwest Franklin County Historical Society

A 501C3 NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

### SOCIETY OFFICERS

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

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

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search for local history?**