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‘Bravery, battle after battle’

French honor to Granville soldier highlight of moving Veterans Day observance

The presentation of the French Knight of the Legion of Honor to Dr. Andrew Sterrett was the highlight of a Veterans Day program honoring, in all, 12 Granville men for the service in World War II. Following are remarks by Honorary French Consul Anne Cappel during her presentation to Dr. Sterrett.

Seventy-two years after seeing action in World War II, Granville resident Andrew A. Sterrett was awarded the French Legion of Honor. At a Veterans Day service in 2016, held in Swasey Chapel at Denison University, Anne Cappel, Honorary French Consul, Ohio, bestowed the medal and ribbon on Dr. Sterrett. Her remarks and those of Dr. Sterrett upon receiving the honor begin below:

Dear Mayor Hartfield

Dear President Weinberg and Dean Woodyard

Dear Lieutenant Colonel Bennett

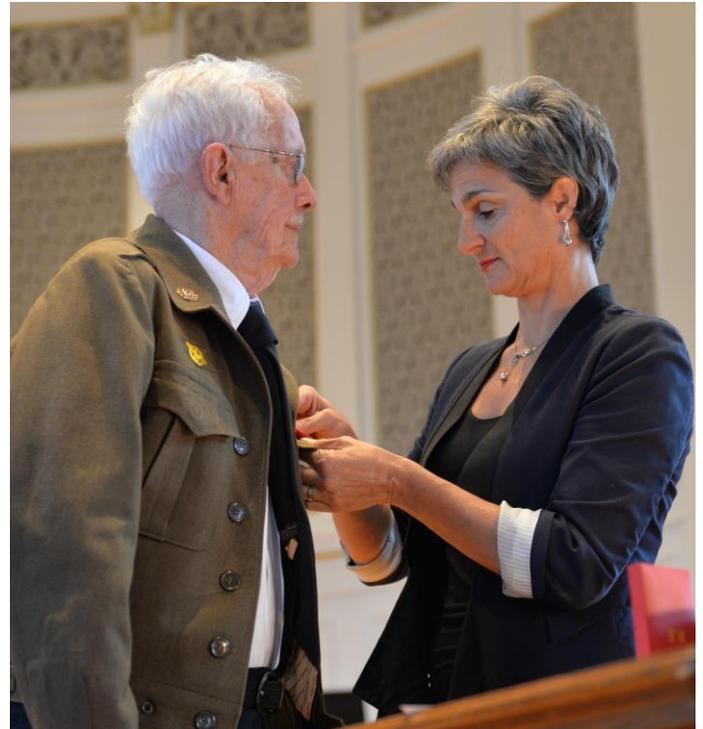
Dear Mr. STERRETT,

Dear Veterans representatives,

Honored Veterans,

And everyone gathered here today,

It is a great honor and privilege to be with you today in Granville to pay tribute to Mr. Andrew Sterrett who was ready to sacrifice his life for France and Western Europe during the Second



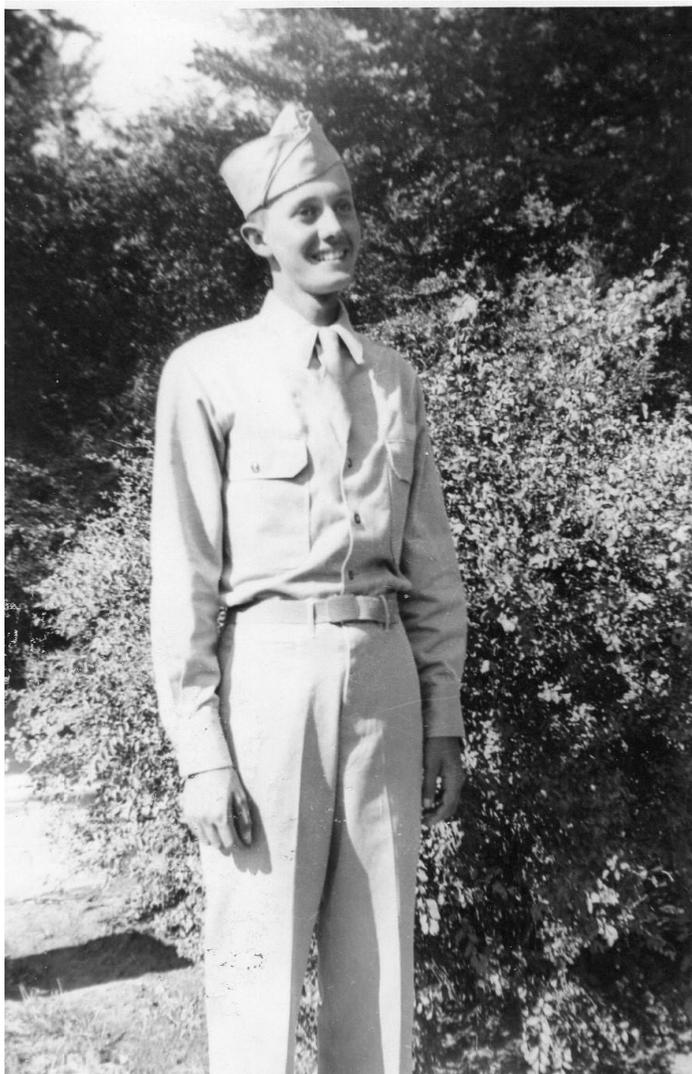
Anne Cappel, Honorary French Consul, Ohio, bestowed the French Knight of the Legion of Honor on Dr. Andrew Sterrett on Veterans Day 2016. (Photo courtesy Denison University)

World War.

This special tribute is also dedicated to all the American soldiers, who embarked on the difficult journey to free a whole continent from intolerance, violence and the tyranny of fascism.

72 years ago, many young Americans put their ideals, their might and their courage to the service of the liberation of France, to the service of democracy and the dignity of humankind. From June 6, 1944, they fought bravely, battle after battle,

Tom Martin is editor of *The Historical Times* and immediate past president of the Granville Historical Society's Board of Managers.



Private First Class Andy Sterrett as a soldier in the Army during World War II.

across France, and like Mr. Andrew Sterrett, they witnessed the worst of the war.

Many did not return but they are in our hearts and fortunately, they are here to help us remember.

Twice last century, in 1917 and 1944, American soldiers restored freedom to the country of France. The French people will never forget what they owe America, their steadfast friend, partner and ally. From Lafayette and Yorktown to the battlefields of World War I, and the shores of Normandy, the two countries have always stood shoulder-to-shoulder to defend and promote the values of freedom and democracy that are the core of who we are.

On that sixth of June of immortal memory, the tide turned. The D-Day landing changed the course of the history of humanity. Victory was still far off. There was much suffering to come. But hope was alive again, at last.

Today, it is that same hope, that same ideal that

we owe to those men whom we shall never, can never, forget. To the French people, the American veterans are heroes.

On behalf of the French government and of the French people, I would like to thank all the veterans. Your engagement is an example, an obligation for us and for future generations.

There can be no future without memory. The torch you carried so high and so far, the torch of freedom, of dignity, of justice and democracy, still lights our way.

Faced with the uncertainties of a changing world, let us strive to remain loyal to the legacy, the sacrifice and the values of the heroes who liberated France.

The French Legion of Honor shows France's eternal gratitude to all the Veterans, and Mr. Sterrett certainly deserves this prestigious decoration.

Mr. Andrew Sterrett entered active service in June 1943 at age 19. From September 1944 until January 1945, Mr. Sterrett fought in the Rhineland and Ardennes campaigns with the 71st regiment of the 44th Infantry Division.

Private Sterrett and his comrades landed in France via Cherbourg on September 15. After a few weeks of rest and training they were deployed on the Lorraine front on October 18 to relieve the 79th division in the vicinity of Forêt de Parroy, east of Lunéville.

The mission was to take part in the 7th Army drive to secure several passes in the Vosges Mountains. But soon, the men of the 44th encountered heavy resistance from the enemy. On November 5th, after completing sentry duty in his foxhole, Mr. Sterrett left to get some rations when the enemy started shelling the American position. Caught in the open, under heavy enemy fire, Mr. Sterrett did not have time to make it to safety. A shell hit near him, almost severing his left arm and badly injuring his right. Thanks to his comrades who took him to cover; to a combat medic who did all he could to save his life; and of course to Mr. Sterrett's strength and determination he is with us today.

Mr. Sterrett received an honorable discharge in July 1945 after months of hospitalization and rehabilitation.

For his bravery, Mr. Sterrett received prestigious American medals, including the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Ribbon, the European African Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with 2 Bronze Campaign



These are Andy Sterrett's medals, highlighted by the French Knight of the Legion of Honor.

stars.

Thanks to your courage, to France's American friends and allies, France has been living in peace for seven decades –the longest period of continuous peace in modern French history.

72 years ago, along with 800,000 of your fellow countrymen, you left America for unknown lands at a very young age to participate in the liberation of France. You were ready to sacrifice your young lives for France's freedom, for a country that was not even yours. Now it is.

The images of those days are part of our collective memory. We will always remember the ultimate sacrifice of so many of your comrades who rest on French soil. Gratitude and remembrance are forever in our souls. Every French person has a special place in his heart for you.

Dear Mr. Sterrett,

In recognition of your heroic actions, and to show his gratitude, the President of the French Republic nominated you to the Legion of Honor. Created by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, it is the highest honor that France can bestow upon those who have achieved remarkable deeds for France.

You wanted France to be free and you fought to liberate France. For France, these are the highest of deeds.

I could not be more honored to present the Legion of

Honor medal to you today. So to each and every one of you, from the bottom of my heart: Thank you.

Mr. Sterrett, in the name of the President of the French Republic, I present you with the medal of Knight of the Legion of Honor.

Mr. Sterrett, au nom du Président de la République française, je vous fais Chevalier dans l'ordre de la Légion d'honneur.

Félicitations, Congratulations.

Officers, board set for 2017

At the Nov. 9 Annual Meeting, members of the Granville Historical Society present elected the following as officers and members of the Board of Managers:

- President — Charles A. Peterson
- Vice President — Dave Skeen
- Secretary — Cynthia Cort
- Treasurer — Jane Wilken

For a three-year term on the Board of Managers:

- Cathy Dollard
- Wayne Piper
- J. David Rinehart

For a one-year term

- Theresa Overholzer

Terms began January 1, 2017

A grateful Legion of Honor recipient remembers those who didn't make it home from the war

Following are Andy Sterrett's remarks on Nov. 11, 2016, upon accepting the French Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal.

I thank French Consul Cappel for presenting this historic medal to me. This medal is another indication that the French government has not forgotten the sacrifices made in France by the men and women of the "Greatest Generation." I'm reminded, too, of a tour of Normandy that Kaarina and I made with a group of Denison graduates. I was looking at a statue of General Patton when a French man thanked me for my service. Coming from a native, that was a very special "thank you."

Actually, I own only a small part of this medal.

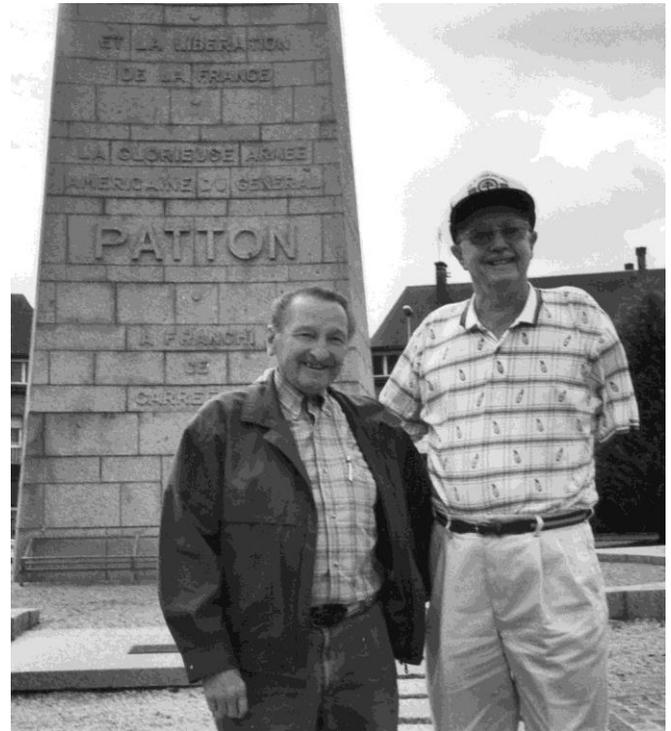
Two close friends, Joe Siano and George Brenner, did not return from France in 1945. Joe and George own this medal, too.

My foxhole buddy, Dwight Larsen, carried me back to safety after I was wounded on Nov. 5, 1944. Dwight was wounded the next day, but survived to return to North Platte, Neb., where he lives today after having served generations as their family doctor. Dwight certainly owns this medal.

Two U.S. doctors who operated on me in France own this medal, as does the staff of the Percy Jones Hospital in Battle Creek, Mich., where they got me on my feet again.

Ken Nash was a member of the Seventh Army in France, 44th Division, 71st Regiment, Company A, Mortar Platoon — but I knew Ken in Granville as my friend and my insurance agent until he began questioning me about my service experience — which turned out to be — Seventh Army, 44th Division, 71st Regiment, Company A, Rifle Platoon. Before going overseas, Ken and I had spent 13 weeks together at Camp Phillips, Kansas, living side by side — Ken with the Mortar Platoon and I with a Rifle Platoon. We had come to a small village in Ohio to become acquainted, and now I'm wearing Ken's army jacket at this ceremony!

Until his death in 2008, Ken organized many reunions for Company A — memories that I greatly



When Andy Sterrett revisited Normandy, he was welcomed by a Frenchman he had never met.

value. Ken surely owns this medal, and I wish Ken was here to share it.

It is appropriate that I receive this medal in the presence of members of my American Legion Post 398. One of its stated purposes is "to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars." Men and women of Post 398 have done that — and much, much more since 1919. They own this medal, too, and especially Kevin Bennett, who nominated me for this high honor and has organized this memorable ceremony.

Many of my friends at Middleton Independent Living are veterans who exhibit the strength of those from the Greatest Generation and from the all-too-many wars that followed. They own this medal, too.

The road from Nov. 5, 1944 until today has been a long one, but I have received tremendous support from my family, from my friends and from my Denison colleagues. For them, too, I proudly accept the French Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal.



World War II veterans honored at the Denison University program on Nov. 11, 2016 were, seated from left: Gilbert (Gil) Plute and John (Jack) Heller, with Mayor Melissa Hartfield kneeling. Middle row, from left: James L. (Jim) Gordon, William (Pete) Ullman, Frederick (Fred) Palmer, Harold (Hal) Atteberry, Dr. Andrew Sterrett, Ohio French Consul Anne Cappel and Trevor (Trig) Campbell. Back row: Arnold (Arnie) Joseph, John Cassell, and James (Jim) Segal. Not pictured: Paul Goodridge. (Photo courtesy Denison University)

12 veterans, 12 stories told recognizing commitment during second world war

By **TOM MARTIN**

At the ceremony honoring Andrew A. Sterrett for receipt of the French Legion of Honor, Art Morrow of the Veteran Service Commission and Melissa Hartfield, Mayor of Granville, contributed background for 11 more community veterans who were present, recognizing their contributions to World War II. Their remarks are summarized as follows.

Andrew (Andy) Sterrett was born and raised in the Pittsburgh area and was a student when war broke out. After D-Day he was sent to France with

the Army's 44th Division. He was severely wounded, losing an arm during a battle near Luneville. In 1953 he began his 26-year teaching career in the Mathematics Department at Denison University after an extensive rehabilitation process and earning his Ph.D. Administratively, he served as Dean of the College, the dean involved in academic matters. He retired in 1989. In the Village, he served several terms on the Granville Board of Education, was a board member of the Granville Foundation, and organized a program to assist local high school students with mathematics through seminars at Denison.

John (Jack) Heller served in the U.S. Navy during the war. Jack grew up in Cleveland and attended Denison. He enlisted after graduation in 1941 and was a supply officer for two years on the USS Daniel A. Joy, a Navy destroyer in the Pacific. His ship was generally on escort and antisubmarine duty; it also provided support for a number of assaults on Japanese-held islands. Jack and his wife, Jane, were driving forces, working for years to establish Kendal at Granville. He served as president of Hospice of Central Ohio

John Cassell served with the Merchant Marine in World War II and in the Coast Guard during the Korean War. In time of war, the Merchant Marine is an auxiliary to the Navy and can be called upon to deliver troops and supplies to the military. During World War II, Merchant Marine ships were often targets of the enemy. John recalled, "We were on a tanker carrying high test gasoline and they put us right in the middle of the convoy, so we were pretty safe." John grew up in Grafton, West Virginia. "I played football in high school," he said, "and when the football season was over I turned in my books and went into the Merchant Marine in November 1944." He sailed throughout the Pacific and Atlantic with his father, who was also in the Merchant Marine. "He was a chief cook and I was second cook and baker," John recalled. John eventually finished his education with a law degree from the University of West Virginia. He and his family moved to Granville in the 1960s, when John joined State Farm Insurance in Newark. For many years he served on the Granville Recreation Commission, is active in the local American Legion post, serving in the Honor Guard for funerals of departed veterans, and is a Vestryman for St Luke's Episcopal Church of Granville.

James L. (Jim) Gordon, a native of Granville, was called up to the Army Air Corps after graduating from Granville High School in 1945. He obtained his pilot's license and enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1944 to avoid being called up until he graduated. He was at Keesler Field in Mississippi in 1945 with the 509th Bomber Squadron, led by Col. Paul Tibbetts, who piloted one of the planes that dropped the atomic bombs on Japan. Thereafter, he was assigned to the 509th squadron where he took part in the Bikini Atoll atomic bomb testing in the Pacific. Jim came back to Granville in 1947 and attended Denison. He graduated in 1950, went on to Yale Law School and became an attorney in Newark. Jim served for 11 years on the Granville Board of Education, as president of the Granville Foundation and of the Granville Rotary Club. To recognize his

involvement in many civic projects, he received the Granville Rotary Service Above Self Award.

James (Jim) Siegel graduated from Newark High School and joined the Army Air Corps in 1946, even though World War II officially ended in September 1945. Having missed the war, he enlisted anyway and spent his time at Lockport Air Force Base (now Rickenbacker National Guard Base) in Columbus. Jim recalls that General Curtis LeMay was in charge of the base and was a pretty stern taskmaster. A Granville resident since 1950, he has been active in promoting local Boy Scout programs, and is best known for long leading the Tree and Landscape Commission. He served on boards for the Granville Library, Historical Society and Centenary Methodist Church.

Trevor (Trig) Gamble entered the Navy just months after World War II ended and was qualified as an aviator serving on aircraft carriers in both the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. He flew the first Navy jets. Trig served not only during the Korean War, but also into the early 1960s during the Berlin and Cuban missile crises. While assigned to a Navy antisubmarine unit, he met and began a long friendship with another Navy aviator who also came to Denison, Ted Barclay. Both continued in the Naval Reserve, and Trig retired with the rank of captain. At Denison, Trig was Professor of Physics and Astronomy and was Dean of Students during the 1970s. He served on the board of United Way, as chairman of the Newark-Granville Symphony Orchestra, was very active with Boy Scouts, (earning the nickname of "Popcorn Colonel" for his years in organizing popcorn fundraisers for Scouts) and is a longstanding elder at Granville Presbyterian Church.

Frederick (Fred) Palmer, a native of Granville, was at Granville High School when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. After graduation in 1944, he wanted to enlist in the Army but was rejected because he was considered underweight. In a time of rationing, a manager of a local grocery store took pity on him and held back bananas for him to eat, "and finally I gained enough weight to get in," Fred notes. Fred was in the Army Corps of Engineers and spent most of his time at Fort Lewis in Seattle, Washington. "My job was to draw supplies like coal and ice and pots and pans and all the stuff for troop trains," he said. Fred ended the war as a sergeant. He worked in the oil business before he started selling real estate in Granville. He served on the Granville Board of Education, was long active with the Masonic organization and raised funds to support Shriner

Hospitals for children.

Harold (Hal) Atteberry, owner of the Granville Milling Co. since 1953, came to Central Ohio after graduating from the University of Illinois. “I was in Texas when the war ended, so I didn't get shot at,” he said. “I was in the Army Signal Corps and they sent me to Salzburg, Austria, where there was a radio/telephone station. They made me a sergeant making \$120. They tried to get me to sign up for another three years, and I thought about it for a long time, but I had promised the folks back home that I would finish college, so I came home.” Hal was one of the primary leaders in establishing a Licking County vocational education school and was a longtime member of Granville Rotary.

Gilbert (Gil) Plute served with the 83rd Infantry Division, nicknamed the “Ohio Division.” He was an infantryman who rose to the rank of Sergeant. He served in the campaigns after the Normandy invasion in northern France. During the Battle of the Bulge, his unit was part of the force led by Gen. George Patton that broke the encircling German lines and relieved the surrounded U.S. forces. He also served in the final drive into Germany, and his unit helped liberate a sub-camp of the Buchenwald concentration camp. He was awarded the Bronze Star for valor on the battlefield. In addition to running the family farm and being one of the founders of the Granville Farmers Market, he also served as a teacher in the Granville Schools and at C-TEC.

Paul Goodridge was a 19-year-old student at Denison in 1944 when he was drafted into the Army and assigned to the 97th Infantry division. His unit was originally scheduled to deploy to the Pacific theater but was diverted to Le Havre, France, where the Seine River meets the English Channel, to replace U.S. casualties from the Battle of the Bulge. As an infantryman, Goodridge saw extensive action in Germany, especially in the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket, which marked the end of major resistance on Nazi Germany's Western front when more than 300,000 German troops were taken prisoner. After Germany surrendered, his outfit was sent back to the U.S. to prepare for the invasion of Japan. Instead, after the Japanese surrender, it was sent to Japan to serve in the occupation. Remarkably, while there, Paul made the acquaintance of a Japanese national who had also attended Denison. Paul came home in 1946, reentered Denison to complete his degree. He worked at North American Aviation and later at the Owens Corning Science and Technology Center in Granville.

William (Pete) Ullman enlisted in the Navy in 1945 at age 17, right after he graduated from Granville High School. He notes, “That's what we all did back then. As soon as you graduated, you enlisted.” Pete was in boot camp when the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan. He was assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown, one of the 24 Essex class carriers built during World War II. Among other missions, he was on board when the Yorktown went to Guam to pick up 4,000 Seabees to bring them back to the States. He came home to get a degree from Denison, where he played basketball. Pete then spent many years at the Owens Corning Fiberglas Technical Center. He served on the Granville Village Council and was always a big booster of the Granville Little League Baseball program, serving the youth of the community in different capacities including coach.

Arnold (Arnie) Joseph was born in Germany but grew up in New York City. He was drafted into the Army after high school. “Three days after my graduation, President Truman said he wanted me to help out,” he quipped. “So I went.” He underwent infantry training for the final assault on Japan. “I was being trained as an infantry reserve,” he said, “which meant if someone got killed at the front lines they sent me in.” At the last minute, he was sent to Germany because he had some knowledge of the German language. In 1945, he was assigned to monitor the mail of the Nazi war criminals awaiting trial at Nuremberg. After his discharge, Arnie earned his Ph.D. at Ohio State University and “eventually ended up at Denison,” he said. He taught French and French literature until he retired in 1990. He spent years employing his cooking and culinary skills to make meals and take them to local citizens who were sick or bed-ridden. In later years he began speaking to groups about his war experiences and early life in fleeing Nazi Germany. Arnie was the subject of a *Historical Times* biography three years ago.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mayor Hartfield concluded remarks with the following acknowledgement: “Ladies and gentlemen, let's give them a hand of thanks for not only their military service, but their many accomplishments in our community. I also believe that Kevin Bennett should be given a hand for his hard work and nomination of Dr. Sterrett for this high honor. Kevin is a retired Army Lieutenant Colonel and spends so much time caring about the history and service of our nation and those that reside in this community.”

GRANVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
115 E. Broadway
P.O. Box 129
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GET CONNECTED, JOIN THE SOCIETY

The Granville Historical Society is an all-volunteer, non-governmental not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization with membership open to all. Joining the Society is a delightful way to meet people who share a love of and interest in Granville's rich, well-documented history. Monthly programs, quarterly publications, and a museum that is open five days a week during the season are some of the ways that enable Society volunteers to share facets of what makes Granville so fascinating with members and guests. Volunteers are welcome in the Archives and Museum Collections areas, as well as museum hosts.

Please visit Granvillehistory.org for further information about all that we do and how you can get involved.

The Granville Historical Society
P.O. Box 129, Granville, OH 43023
740-587-3951

GranvilleHistorical@gmail.com
www.granvillehistory.org

Granville History Museum and Robinson
Research Center, 115 West Broadway.