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How a Denison professor evolved into a Granville icon

‘Did you know...’ Richard H. ‘Dick’ Mahard?

by **MAGGIE BROOKS**

“Did you know...?” If you knew professor Richard H. “Dick” Mahard then you know that it was one of his favorite ways of starting a conversation. So it was one Fourth of July weekend when I volunteered to open the Old Academy Building for the display of historic photographs. The building was a pet project of Mahard, who was instrumental in its restoration, putting in 15 to 20 hours a week overseeing and doing odd jobs about the building. After learning that I was a native of northern New Jersey, Dick immediately asked if I knew anything about The Hudson River Palisades. I didn’t know much; I think Dick knew everything. It was an interesting afternoon and made me wish I could go back and study geology.

Mahard came to Granville in 1941 to join the Denison University faculty in Geology and Geography. He had earned his bachelor’s degree at Michigan State Normal College (now Eastern Michigan University) and had been admitted to Columbia University’s graduate school in geology without ever having taken a course in it as an undergraduate. He earned both his master’s and doctoral degrees at



Mahard had the honor of unveiling the new Ohio Historical Marker at the Old Academy Building in 1999.

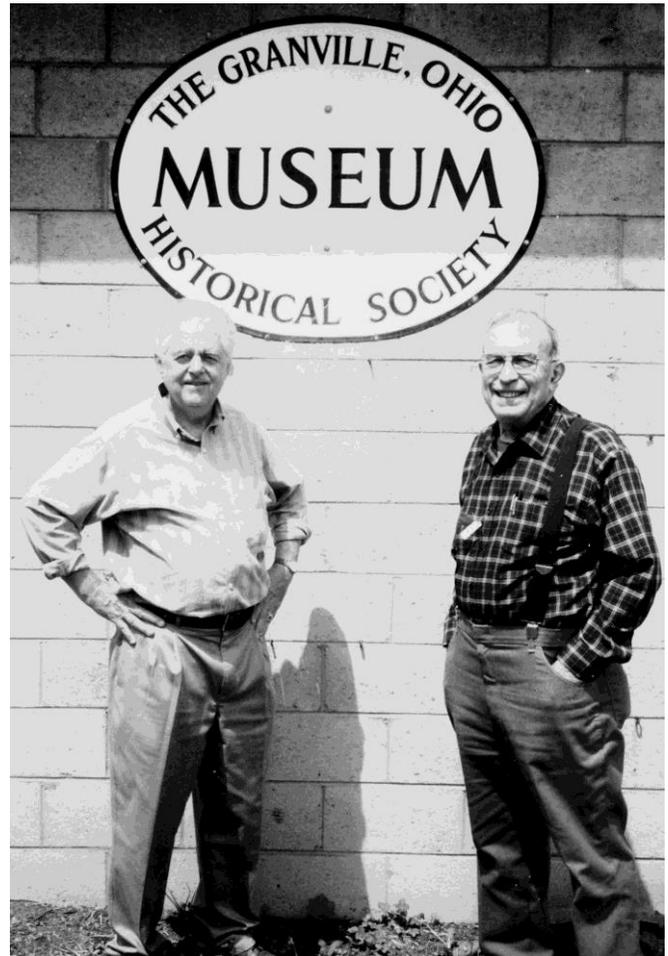
Columbia. During his long academic career he developed special interests in world political geography, the geology and geography of the U.S., and the then-emerging field of plate tectonics. In addition to his long tenure at Denison, he served as a visiting instructor at Stanford University, Columbia University the University of Michigan and elsewhere. When presented by the Denison University Board of Trustees with the Distinguished Service Award, he read what he said was the most important message he had ever received — his letter of appointment as a Denison faculty member.

Among the students who studied with Mahard was the late U.S. Supreme Court Judge William Rehnquist. Rehnquist was one of the World War II Marine Corps' V-12 trainees that were stationed at Denison for map-reading courses. Mahard also taught world geography to cadets enrolled in pre-meteorology for the Air Corps, and taught cadets in an Air Force Officer Training program established during the Korean conflict. Mahard was the last Denison faculty member to retire who was active throughout World War II.

Among his Denison students were Senator and Mrs. Richard Lugar and Hal Holbrook who said, "Who would have ever thought I could become interested in geology? It was a struggle of some proportions, as Dick Will quickly agree, but no teacher I ever had in school took such a friendly interest in me while I was doing so poorly in his course." Hundreds of alumni, if not thousands, will remember Dick as marshal for the traditional Alumni Parade of Classes during Reunion Weekend and for leading tours of historic sites in Granville.

Prof. Mahard was active in several national organizations, serving as secretary and vice president of the Geology-Geography section for the Association for the Advancement of Science, where he was a fellow. He also was a fellow of the Geological Society of America and of the Ohio Academy of Science, for which he also served as president.

Granville benefitted from his service as Village Council member, Village treasurer, trustee of the Sugar Loaf Foundation, and as President of the Granville Historical Society. He was named a permanent member of the Society's board and was recognized in 2001, along with his wife Marian, with



Mahard (right) is pictured with Society board member Dick Horton during the 1990s with a new Granville Historical Museum sign.

the Harold "Buck" Sargent Volunteer Award. Society president Dick Daly praised the Mahards, saying, "Unstinting service to the Granville Historical Society includes imparting a deep knowledge of Granville history and plumbing repair, fine sewing, portraying historic characters, gardening, baking, and making donations of time, money and wisdom."

A self-labeled "rubber necker" and "sidewalk supervisor," his expertise allowed him to recognize that a 1-ton boulder coughed up by street repair crews on Thresher Street in 1997 had been deposited by the retreating glaciers of 20,000 years ago. That rock, part of the geologic Canadian Shield, is among the oldest in the world, dating back some 2 billion years. Mahard proposed that it rest in Opera House Park as a solid reminder of the Village's bicentennial.

His expertise and attention to detail also helped identify 19th century marbles that were in the

New to Denison by one year, Mahard (upper right corner of group) listens during a presentation in spring 1942 at the Rose Quarry just off the campus hill. (The quarry was later filled in to become a parking lot just north of DU's Crawford hall, much to Mahard's disdain.)



collection at the Granville Life-Style Museum and to discount an Elm tree as being old enough to be a bicentennial tree. After counting rings, Mahard determined that the elm was a sprout during the Civil War. When fire destroyed the Opera House, Dick managed to salvage white pine wood from the pilasters and some balcony balusters. They provided a connection to the village he loved so well after he crafted them into a trestle table and benches and candlesticks for his home.

Did you know Dick Mahard? I'm happy to say I did. One person wrote on the occasion of his retirement: "There is at least one realm in which you

are without peer...And that is caring for the lost, the hurting, and forgotten. The many acts of kindness you have, with Marian, extended to hundreds in Granville is surely your greatest gift to Granville and Denison. Picking up broken threads and weaving them into the pattern of community is a godly task. And it is one in which you and your wife reveal the goodness ordered for all creation."

Maggie Brooks, a past president of the Society's Board of Managers, is an emeritus board member and currently is editor of the Society's monthly Modern Times newsletter.

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



A temporary wall on the museum's first floor came down in January 2017 to create a brighter, more flexible exhibits space. The space inside the studs above was once the Society's tiny archives.

Society makes strides in busy 2017

by **CHARLES A. PETERSON**
President, Board of Managers

The Granville Historical Society had an outstanding year of achievement in 2017, ranging from new exhibits and programs to improvements to the "physical plant," outlined here in generally chronological order.

The first significant move we made, in our museum, was the removal of the wall in the third room back from the front entrance. As a result of this great idea, additional space for exhibits was opened up, and the light that now floods into this area is amazing.

For the second straight year, the museum offered a new exhibition, leading with "Granville

on Wheels" in the front room featuring 19th-century household appliances and modes of transportation for which wheels were important in making these items work. Included is the recently donated James Houston Buggy from the mid-1800s, donated by T. David Price and Robert O'Neill.

The Cherry Room exhibit recalled our nation's entry into World War I a century ago, and in the next room we featured "Finding Granville," with fascinating photos and topographical maps and examples of antique surveying equipment along with our stone artifacts.

We also reassembled "Oese's Kitchen," with

items given to the Society by the former Granville Life-Style Museum where this 40s-50s style kitchen originated. This exhibit continues to be one of our most popular.

Last but certainly not least, the Robinson Research Center exhibit area featured a history of and photos of the old Opera House, a building that started as the home of the First Baptist Church in 1849. The Opera House served as a major community center for 100 years before it burned down in 1982.

Several improvements were made to the museum this year, made possible by a grant from the Granville Community Foundation, for six important projects in the areas of exhibits, safety and office management.

The grant helped to fund the wheels addition to the Conestoga wagon for the “Wheels of Granville” exhibit.

In terms of safety, this grant enabled us to install two safety rails, one at the front entrance of the museum where visitors are required to take two steps up to enter, and a railing for the wheelchair ramp leading from the front room to the Cherry Room inside the museum.

In our museum office, we were able to install new office cabinets that have reduced congestion in an office that has become busier every year over the past decade.

We also installed a bracket in front of the museum to display banners announcing current exhibits and programs.

Last but not least, a major share of this grant helped to fund new shelving for display and sale of our many publications. Shelves similar to that used by the Granville Public Library for its magazine collection were installed, incorporating tilting shelves for display of books and publications, with storage space for those volumes behind the shelves. This project



Keith Boone eyes the finished product - installation of the new bracket in front of the museum that will hold posters announcing Society events. The bracket was one of many projects last year made possible with grant funding from the Granville Community Foundation.

was especially exciting because over the years we have been extremely active in producing a large number of quality publications for a Society of our size. And this doesn't just include our newsletters, but also very fine books including our three-volume bicentennial set, and our Pocket History series, an achievement made possible in the past with assistance from the Granville Community Foundation. Number seven in that series, on the history of the Granville Fire Department, was published just last November.

A very special occasion was the first lecture program funded by the Dale and Tina Knobel Endowed Program Series in May featuring



Society member Dave Skeen (foreground) portrayed Martin Root during the 2017 Ghost Walk at the Old Colony Burying Ground. Deb Eddy, right, portrayed Martin's wife Mary and Sally Leithauser, left, was Martin's daughter, Mary.

Donald G. Schilling, Professor Emeritus of History at Denison University, with the topic "Granville on the Brink," discussing both the global and local settings prior to World War I.

In the realm of education, the one-room school program was also held in May in the Old Academy Building, and as part of a local history day that week Granville third-graders had their annual museum visit.

Our connection with the Old Colony Burying Ground remained strong last year. As president of the Society's Board of Managers, I was invited to welcome visitors to the dedication of the new Messenger Family Headstones last April there. And last fall several Society members portrayed Granville pioneers for the Historic Granville Ghost walk the Society helped to sponsor with the Union Cemetery

RIGHT: Brian Gregory was again a nifty-looking greeter outside the Granville Historical Museum for both Beggars Night and the Christmas Candlelight Walking Tour.



Board, which governs the pioneer cemetery.

Publicity for the Society improved by leaps and bounds last year thanks to the work of new board member Wayne Piper, who chairs the new Publicity Committee. We had several features in *The Granville Sentinel* done by Editor Craig McDonald, who also published all of our press releases.

Last but not least, the October program entitled “Remembering the Old Opera House” drew an audience of nearly 100, with many of them contributing their recollections of the once iconic building.

The Society’s membership has remained steady with nearly 200 households, and a total of 1,460 visited the museum this past season. We also measure “touches,” which counts the

many of ways the Society reaches individuals ranging from museum visits to the number of people attending programs to visitors in the Archives. For 2017, that total was 17,037.

So many of these achievements could not be done without a dedicated set of officers and Board of Managers. My thanks go to the following: Vice President David Skeen, Secretary Cynthia Cort and Treasurer Jane Wilken; board members Anne Aubourg, Keith Boone, Cathy Dollard, Theresa Overholser, Wayne Piper, Janet Procida, J. David Rinehart, Ron Sherwood, and Amy Welsh; and Emerita Board Member Maggie Brooks.

Also thanks to Office Manager Jodi Lavelly for her work in keeping Society officials on their toes.



Janet Procida was the teacher for the Society’s annual one-room schoolhouse program for Granville third-grade students in the Old Academy Building.



ABOVE: Local artist Laurie Clarke painted a scary backdrop for Beggars Night at the museum, where parents took pictures of their trick-or-treaters.



LEFT: Granville third-graders make their annual trek downtown that always includes a visit to the Granville Historical Museum.

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Granville Historical Society Statement of Revenue and Expense

For the Period ending December 31, 2017

Revenue		Expenses	
Annual Fund 2016	\$ 1,035	Accessions	\$ -
Annual Fund 2017	11,810	Archives	314
Membership Dues	12,220	Board Expenses	918
Books & Merchandise	3,384	Bldg & Grds	17,063
Other donations	992	Collections	537
Programs	2,340	Exhibits	299
Other Income	4,519	Grant Expenses	9,815
Withdrawal from Trust Account	1,900	Membership	413
Withdrawal from Mahard Trust	3,600	Museum Operations	111
Grants		Programs	6,224
Granville Foundation	7,430	Publicity	267
Granville Garden Club	500	Publications	1,274
Village of Granville	1,500	Society Support	17,210
Township	3,000	TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>54,445</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 54,230	EXCESS REVENUE/EXPENSE	<u>\$ (215)</u>

Society concludes 2017 in sound financial order

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017 the Granville Historical Society received \$12,220 in membership contributions and \$12,845 in annual fund contributions.

The society also received \$12,430 in grants. The largest grant received was from the Granville Community Foundation for a publication display area, outside banner displays and interior railing and cabinets.

Other grants received were from the Village and Granville Township for maintenance of archival records and databases and from The Granville Garden Club for landscaping of exterior grounds.

Sales of Society publications were 67 percent higher than budgeted. Also, for the

first time the Society participated in The Columbus Foundation's Big Give that raised \$1,270 for the Society.

The Society withdrew \$1,900 from the Knobel Endowment for the inaugural lecture funded by this Endowment and \$3,600 from the Mahard Trust for monies spent on maintenance of the Old Academy Building during 2016.

Expenses were all within budgeted amounts resulting at the end of the year in excess expense of \$215. Cash balances as of December 31, 2017 were \$54,127 slightly lower than at the start of the year.

The Society ended 2017 in sound financial condition.

**Granville Historical Society
Approved Budget for 2018**

Revenue

Annual Fund - Prior Year	\$6,000
Annual Fund - Current Year	\$12,000
Books and Publications	\$2,000
Membership Dues	\$13,000
Other donations	\$1,000
Other Income	\$1,500
Withdrawals from Investment Account	\$7,000
Withdrawal from Mahard Trust	\$1,600
Withdrawal from Trust Account	\$1,800
Grants	
Granville Garden Club	\$500
Village of Granville	\$1,500
Granville Township	\$3,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$50,900

Expenses

Accessions	\$200
Archives	\$450
Board Expenses	\$1,380
Bldg & Grds	\$19,955
Collections	\$600
Community Relations	\$700
Exhibits	\$500
Membership	\$800
Museum Operations	\$400
Programs	\$2,500
Publications	\$2,900
Publicity (Marketing)	\$500
Society Support	\$19,300
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$50,185</u>
EXCESS REVENUE/EXPENSE	<u>\$715</u>

Investment accounts show amiable growth in 2017

The Granville Historical Society has three (3) separate investment "accounts". In all cases the goal for these accounts is to preserve capital and grow the accounts after permitted withdrawals:

- Endowment Fund account - proceeds used for museum operations.

- Balance as of 1/1/2017 = \$142,636.

- Balance as of 12/31/2017 = \$163,233.

- No withdrawals during 2017.

- Mahard Trust account - proceeds used only for the maintenance, operation and utilities for the Old Academy Building.

- Balance as of 1/1/2017 = \$119,958.

- Balance as of 12/31/2017 = \$126,760.

- Permitted withdrawal of \$3,600 during 2017.

- Knobel Fund account - proceeds used for Society programming.

- Balance as of 1/1/2017 = \$51,082.

- Balance as of 12/31/2017 = \$55,353.

- Permitted withdrawal of \$1,900 during 2017.

The investment vehicles have been chosen by members of the Finance Committee (Tom Martin, Rick Moller, Charles Peterson, Jane Wilken, and David Rinehart - chair) with our thanks to the able advice of Mr. Moller.

Volunteers help the Granville Historical Society thrive: THANKS

The Granville Historical Society's Board of Managers thank the following individuals who contributed so many volunteer hours in 2017 to ensure the success of the Society's programs, publications, archives, collections and educational efforts, upkeep of our buildings and grounds and staffing the museum. An asterisk (*) indicates those who served on the Board of Managers and a double-asterisk (**) denotes individuals named as emeritus members of the Board of Managers.

Linda Ailes, Anne Aubourg*, Patrick Aubourg, Jessica Bean, Kevin Bennett, Larry Bicking, Liz Bicking, Keith Boone*, Lyn Boone, Nancy Brede, Maggie Brooks**, Earl Browning, Lori Clarke, Cameron Close, Cynthia Cort*, Laurie MacKenzie Crane, Dick Daly, Catherine Dollard*, Stewart Dyke,

Deb Eddy, Laura Evans, Joyce Fleitz, Tracey Fleitz, Beverly Gage, Leon Gage, Dorothy Garrett, Brian Gregory, James G. Hale, Willow Heichel, Flo Hoffman**, Bill Holloway, Jane Holloway, Chris Julian, Marilyn Jung, Suzanne Kennedy, Norm Kennedy, Jennifer Evans Kinsley, Rita Kipp, Rich Kipp, Bill Kirkpatrick, Tim Klingler, Jodi Lavelly, Marianne Lisska, Tony Lisska, Barb Martin, Tom Martin*, Rick Moller, Cheryl Moore, Madison Murray, Nancy Noeker, Fleur Metzger, Lynn Overholser, Sarah Overholser, Theresa Overholser*, Charles A. Peterson*, Wayne Piper*, Kathy Poulton, Janet Philipps Procida*, J. David Rinehart*, Mary Jo Seiple, Ron Sherwood*, Becky Skeen, David Skeen*, Marilyn Sundin, Amy Welsh*, Jane Wilken*, Bill Wilken and Gary Yeakle.

Flo Hoffman a visionary force for local history

As most of you know, our friend Flo Hoffman died on July 15th. She was one of a kind, an original, a genuine force in the lives of her fellow human beings for almost nine decades.

A large part of those many years of Flo's life were devoted to historical preservation, and we all are the beneficiaries of that. At Denison University, she served as institutional archivist for more than twenty years, determinedly preserving the College's history at a self-taught but professional standard that set the stage for the highly trained archivists who succeeded her.

Flo shared those well-honed preservationist skills, on a voluntary basis, with the Granville Historical Society. Beyond her devoted service on the organization's board for multiple terms, she created the Society's archives as they exist today.

Current archivist Theresa Overholser remembers that before Flo's arrival, she had occasion to glimpse the GHS "archives" briefly and remembers a virtual pandemonium of paper materials and artifacts. Several years later, after Flo's gentle but firm hand had been applied, that same room was becoming a model of order, logic, care, and -- perhaps most importantly -- respect for the documents and items that constitute our Granville heritage.

From there the GHS archives continued to emerge under Flo's steady direction. Overholser worked with her for years, finding the relationship unfailingly pleasant, fun, and instructive. "Flo almost always had an answer -- or would find the answer -- to the thousands of questions that came her way," she said. "It was really hard to stump her!"

The pair's most fulfilling initiative was the Granville bicentennial photo book, according to Overholser. A massive project, the album remains a perennial favorite among GHS patrons a dozen years after Granville's 200th birthday.

Friend and co-worker Lyn Boone insists, however, that Flo's highest triumph in Granville history was



Flo Hoffman pictured in the Archives on the evening of the dedication of the new Robinson Research Center. Photo by Charles A. Peterson

the project to preserve the Old Colony Burying Ground, the Village's historic cemetery.

"Flo liked to tell the story," Boone said, "of how she and civic leader Carl Frazier visited the graveyard one day in the late 1980s, finding to their despair a yard in such disarray and neglect that it seemed almost a debris pile." That day was a turning point.

"Together," Boone said, "Flo and Carl put their formidable energies behind the effort to research, fund, and staff a multi-year preservation project that has turned that debris pile of broken headstones into a permanent historic park." Key in the effort were historic preservationists Jim and Minnie Fannin. They were close personal friends of Flo to the end, through the years of her debilitating illness.

Granville's story -- and its preservation -- will go on. That is the philosophical approach that Flo would have taken to the end of her own contribution to the effort. But enduring efforts are born of dedication, determination, and vision, and that was Flo Hoffman's legacy in preserving Granville's history. It's a legacy that now is ours to carry on.

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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.

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