



# THE HISTORICAL TIMES

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## What's old is new

### 19<sup>th</sup> century board game still played in Granville



**Limber fingers are an asset when playing Crokinole.**

**By CHARLES A. PETERSON**

A board game popular during the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Granville and elsewhere lives on in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. You can find it played in a basement recreation room on the east side of the village.

"Crokinole", described on the BoardGameGeek website as "shuffleboard in the round," originated in 1876, according to the same site. It's mentioned in William T. Utter's book *Granville - The Story of an Ohio Village*, in a chapter describing Granville's social development in the late 1800s.

"Granville's horizons were broadening and yet for the most part her diversions were home-centered," a paragraph in chapter 17, "At the Turn of the Century," begins. "The columns of the newspapers were filled with references to lawn parties, visits to friends in the country, sleigh rides,

and Sunday School picnics. The Betas (the Beta Theta Phi fraternity at Denison University) invited guests for an evening of progressive crokinole, with the Solid Four furnishing incidental music, or Frank Robinson had friends in for Tiddlywinks..."

The game's popularity here continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A local news column in a December 1904 issue of *The Granville Times* mentions Crokinole in an apparent list of Christmas gift ideas available at the local "book store" along with games such as Ping Pong, Flinch, Panic, Wiggs, Bunco and Dominoes. The *Times* also mentions the game in a March 1908 account of a Presbyterian Supper, stating, "The bean bag and crokinole contests between the session and the board of trustees were amusing in the extreme."

When Steve Thaxton moved his family to

Granville on New Year's Day 2014, he found a copy of Utter's book, read it, and noted a mention of Crokinole, which he had already been familiar with in his family growing up in the Cleveland area.

"We always played it whenever we got back to visit Ohio, but I had never seen it anywhere else," he said. "I was excited to read about how it was popular in Granville and throughout this band of the Midwest, Great Lakes region and southeastern Canada, particularly at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century."

A Crokinole board is a polished wood circle, with concentric scoring circles around a 1 3/16-inch center hole, protected by eight bumpers, that scores the ultimate 20-point shot for landing it in. A fifteen-, ten-, and then five-point circle comprise the remainder of the board.

"The game is played by alternating teams, shooting twelve 1 1/4-inch wooden pucks or discs into the center circles," Steve explains. "Well-made discs are milled to have one side slightly concave and the other slightly convex so that shooters can choose the level of spin or drag they want for the shot."

In addition to shooting for points, he said, players use their shots to knock their opponent's disc from the playing surface. Games are played either one-on-one or with alternating doubles each manning a side of the board.

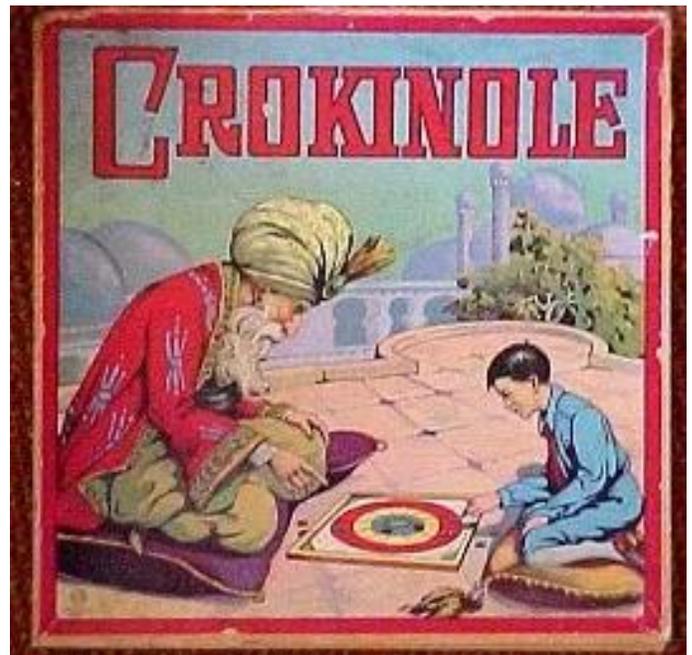
"Cancellation scoring is done at the end of each round until either a predetermined score or number of rounds is complete," Steve said.

Steve, who recently was elected to the Granville Historical Society's Board of Managers as an at-large member, often plays the game with his sons in their basement rec area.

"My boys love to play it and we often play it during family gatherings or when having people over to the house — when not social distancing," he said. "It is very rare that I meet someone who has played it before and even more rare that I meet someone who doesn't really enjoy it."

Steve found the Utter book in the library of a home the family rented while waiting for their new home to become available. That was also a rough winter in Central Ohio, he said, calling it "the snowiest and coldest winter that our area had seen in almost 30 years."

"Dr. Utter's book really helped get me through several straight weeks trapped inside," he said. "The



**An early version of the Crokinole game box.**

stories of the migration and founding of the village were really striking, particularly how intentionally our community was planned and developed."

"I also found great inspiration in the stories of the cooperation between the New Englanders and the Welsh, the community's efforts to support the Underground Railroad and the collective efforts in education and equality," he said. "It demonstrates what I love so much about our community today, a real sense of collectiveness, collaboration, and consciousness."

"There was so much of that spirit eager to help shovel or push me out of several snow bound struggles that first winter, and of course you see it every day in all our community efforts," he said.

"My favorite story, however, was Dr. Utter's retelling of the Great Granville Riot of 1836. I hope his narrative is the most accurate because it definitely sounds like the most fun."

As for Crokinole, he noted the game is particularly popular in Canada.

"The World Crokinole Championship has been held every year since 1999 in Tavistock, Ontario, where local farmer, Eckhardt Wettlaufer made the first known board as a birthday gift for his five-year-old son in 1876," Steve said. "As earlier references to the game are cited in Ontario and New York, however, it is believed by many that Wettlaufer recreated the game board after seeing it on visits with friends, and that the origin of the game has much deeper Mennonite or Amish roots."

# ANNUAL REPORT



The new Robinson Research Center hosted several Granville Historical Society programs following its completion in 2012.

## 25 years of growth

### Historical Society's successes recounted at annual meeting

By **CHARLES A. PETERSON**

Out-going Board of Managers president Cynthia Cort, presenting the program for the Granville Historical Society's 2020 annual meeting, reviewed a mountain of achievements for the Society during the last quarter century.

But her chief message was this: "...how proud I am of all that we do and our role in documenting the people and the history of this small town," Cynthia said during the organization's virtual annual meeting, held online via Zoom on Dec. 2, with nearly 50 members and guests logged on. "That's what we're here for and I think we do a heck of a job."

Cynthia, who ended two consecutive years as Board of Managers president in addition to two years in the position prior to that, outlined many of the Society's accomplishments, describing an evolution that began with modernization of the membership roll and record-keeping for the artifacts collection starting in the late 1990s.

High on the list of boasts, however, was the construction of the Robinson Research Center in the

rear of the museum building at 15 East Broadway downtown, completed and celebrated in 2012.

Cynthia said that acquisition of a significant part of the former Granville Life-Style Museum's collection after it closed in 2009 became a catalyst for serious discussions about expanding the Society's storage space, "something we had been talking about for a while." The Life-Style museum was located in the red-brick structure on South Main Street, the former home of the Robinson family.

"The Life-Style Museum of the Hubert and Oese Robinson Foundation closed its doors," Cynthia related. "They offered us their five-generation archive and the first choice of their collections, which had the effect of giving us a local, intact 20<sup>th</sup> century collection. We had been talking about collecting the 20<sup>th</sup> century for some time, since almost all of our earlier collections were from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, it doubled the size of our collection."

A \$100,000 gift from the Life-Style Museum as it closed became seed money for a serious fundraising

effort, albeit in the middle of the Great Recession, that led to the addition of the 4,500 sq. ft., three-level Robinson Research Center in an empty space behind the museum building. The new section, costing \$750,000, included office space and meeting/exhibit space on the ground floor; a new, expanded archives with office and a public space for research on the second floor; and an expansion of the basement where the Society's artifacts inventory, managed by Cynthia in her role as collections manager, is located.

Cynthia also worked as the Society's liaison with the Robertson Construction Services, builder of the addition, besides involvement with fundraising, coordinating with the Village of Granville and taking daily photographs of the progress of the construction.

"We did ground-penetrating radar to make sure there wasn't anything important under the backyard," she said. "We collected things that were found (underground), mostly bottles, and a section of the interurban car rails that went between the museum building and Park National Bank."

"The biggest event for me," she said, "was at 3:30 in the morning when a truck from a pre-fab concrete place in Toledo showed up and brought floor slabs, which are 8 feet wide, 25 feet long and 10 inches thick. The thickness of the floor was to accommodate the weight of the archives."

Cynthia joined the Society in the mid-1990s at the beckoning of then-board president Tom Martin, who invited her to be Membership chair on the board, when she promptly set up a member database. "At the time," she said, "membership was a list that had been Xeroxed onto labels for several years and not updated."

Shortly there-after, Cynthia filled the newly-vacant Museum chair position for management of volunteers, setting up exhibits, and caring for the artifacts collection.

"I asked that the collections job be separated from the volunteer job because for some years the volunteer work had gotten all the attention, and the collections had had none.

Cynthia then began an inventory of the collections, an area for which she had training. "The collections were wonderful but not well-documented," she said. "I found a box of 3 x 5 cards that said things like 'Chair' with a number. During



**Flo Hoffman takes a turn with the shovel at the 2011 ground-breaking for the Robinson Research Center.**

the subsequent inventory, the number would be found painted on a chair in white paint. Sometimes the chair would have two or three additional numbers from different times the cataloging was attempted. The last series of numbers was the most complete, so I continued to use it."

In June of 2001, the big step was taken to acquire PastPerfect, a museum database program that contains information on Archives, Library, and Objects as well as memberships and donations.

"It is in this program that we have been slowly building up the files with information on sources, histories, photographs, et cetera," she said. "We owe thanks to Ron Sherwood, who took many of the pictures, as well as documenting the archives and the artifact collection."

Cynthia had considerable volunteer help as the inventorying continued, which included assigning a unique number to each object as well as measuring and describing its appearance, materials and history.

"Here I would like to especially thank Marilyn

Jung, who has been doing this since the beginning and, except for COVID 19, would be doing it now. She and Bill Hoffman and I often worked together listing items to be entered into the computer.” (Bill Hoffman was the husband of longtime Society stalwart Flo Hoffman, essentially the organization’s first archivist and someone who attracted Cynthia to Granville’s history realm when Flo started renovation of the Old Colony Burying Ground, the village’s pioneer cemetery.)

“For those who are interested,” Cynthia continued, “we meet on Fridays from 10 to 12 and then go to lunch. As soon as the pandemic subsides, you are all welcome to join in.”

Eventually, the Society’s newly well-managed materials, whether three-dimensional or on paper, helped to expand the Society’s achievements.

“We have all along been providing access to the large collection of archival materials that Flo started organizing in the 1980s,” Cynthia continued. “We have offered dozens of presentations, researched and gotten permission for eight Ohio Historical Markers, and published *The Historical Times*, which was started by Flo Hoffman, Mary Ann Malcuit and Tony Lisska and now in its 34th year.”

Among the Historical Markers the Society acquired were for recognition of three sites: the Old Academy Building including its role in the Abolitionist movement in 1841, the Old Colony Burying Ground as the pioneer cemetery, and the Denison University Fine Arts Quad along West Broadway, telling the story of its role in early and current Granville education.

Elsewhere, archival materials contributed to the publication of 15 books including the three-volume 2005 Bicentennial series, and eight “pocket histories” that provide short histories on specific local topics.

“Also, since 2011, we have published a monthly online newsletter, *The Modern Times*, about current activities,” Cynthia said.

“In 2001-2002 we undertook an oral history



**An Ohio Historical Marker was dedicated for the Old Colony Burying Ground in 2006.**

project for Granville and recorded and transcribed 80 cassettes of interviews of local people,” Cort said. “In 2003 this project was incorporated into a statewide bicentennial play made up of oral histories from around the state. A team of us participated in this readers’ theater project here in Granville and at the Ohio State Fair that year.”

She added that the Society has presented walking tours of the village and graveyard tours and theater. More recently it has added computing capacity (up from one in 1996 to eight currently), created an online presence, including making back issues of *The Historical Times* available, and is working at beefing up its social media presence.

Her presentation included a number of photos taken through the years, including several of volunteers.

“Thanks to all of our many members, donors and volunteers over the years,” she said. “Thank you ALL very much! I loved looking for these pictures because it looks like everyone is having such a great time.”

Approved during the annual meeting were four Board of Managers officer positions and four at-large board nominees. New to the board, all in three-year terms, are Jennifer Graham, a Granville native involved in several local organizations, with a background in visual design; Steve Thaxton, a relatively new resident who is an engineer at the



**LEFT: Work on the Robinson Research Center building addition began in 2011 behind the existing museum.**

**BELOW: Mayor Melissa Hartfield speaks at the dedication of the Robinson Research Center in 2012.**

Owens Corning Science and Technology Center; and Tom Lee, a Central Ohio architect living in Granville Township where he is a maple syrup farmer.

“Each new board member brings new skills and interests, and our projects shift accordingly,” Cynthia said. “I look forward to next year and the exciting prospects our new board members will bring to our activities.”



## Activity in Society’s three account funds outlined for 2020

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

- Endowment Fund - proceeds used for museum operations.
  - Balance as of 1/1/2020 = \$190,197.
  - Balance as of 12/31/2020 = \$209,630.
  - No withdrawals during 2020.
- Mahard Trust - proceeds used only for the maintenance, operation and utilities for the Old Academy Building.
  - Balance as of 1/1/2020 = \$138,451.
  - Balance as of 12/31/2020 = \$140,780.
  - No withdrawals during 2020.
- Knobel Fund - proceeds used for Society

programming.

- Balance as of 1/1/2020 = \$59,338.
- Balance as of 12/31/2020 = \$61,063.
- No withdrawals during 2020.

The committee met in January, June and December 2020 with its financial advisor to review the portfolio and make changes as necessary to meet the Investment Policy of each Fund/Trust account.

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

— *David Rinehart, Chair*  
*Historical Society Finance Committee*

# Treasurer: 2020 expenses were within budgeted totals

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2020, the Granville Historical Society received \$8,542 in membership contributions, and \$22,578 in Annual Fund contributions. It also received \$3,000 from Granville Township for support of various projects, \$1,500 from the Village for storing the Village's archives and a \$3,874 grant from the Granville Community Foundation to install Story Boards and digitize historic interview recordings.

The Society received \$1,885 from the sale of publications, which included the 2020 publication, Pocket History #8, "Granville's Tycoon: John Sutphin Jones and the Gilded Age."

The Society did not withdraw funds from its endowment or investment accounts in 2020.

Expenses were within budgeted amounts, with the majority of the Society's expenses related to

upkeep of the two buildings and for general support (including staffing, equipment rental and insurance) of the Society's operations.

The Society ended the year with an operating surplus of \$5,568 after deciding not to transfer funds from its investment account to its operating accounts. It was decided to maintain that excess cash in investments to allow those funds the opportunity to grow.

The Society ended the year with a cash balance of \$28,905 in the operating bank account, \$6,311 in the publications account and investments of \$411,473 as of Dec 31, 2020, which includes an unrealized gain of \$23,487 yielded during 2020.

The financial reports below only provide income and expense details of the operating account.

-- Kim Manley, Treasurer

Granville Historical Society Approved 2021 Budget Compared To 2020 Approved Budget			Granville Historical Society Income/Expenses 1-1-2020 to 12-31-2020	
	2020 Approved Budget	2021 Proposed Budget		1/1/2020- 12/31/2020
<b>Revenue</b>			<b>INCOME</b>	
Annual Fund Prior Year	1,000	-	Annual Fund	
Annual Fund Current Year	12,000	12,000	TOTAL Annual Fund	22,578.39
Books and Merchandise	2,000	1,500	TOTAL Books & Merchandise	1,692.04
Membership Dues	11,000	10,000	TOTAL Donations, Other	3,757.68
Other donations	700	700	TOTAL Grants	9,327.96
Programs	-	-	TOTAL Interest & Investments Income	6.16
Other Income	1,000	1,000	TOTAL Membership Income	8,542.25
Withdrawal from Investment Account	7,000	7,000	TOTAL Other Inc-Other Income	162.78
Withdrawal from Mahard Trust	2,460	2,460	TOTAL Programs - Events	0.00
Withdrawals from Knobel Funds	2,000	3,000	TOTAL INCOME	46,067.26
Grants			<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Granville Community Foundation		-	TOTAL A Payable	-629.10
Granville Garden Club		-	TOTAL Accessions	59.45
Village of Granville (Archive)	1,500	1,500	TOTAL Archives	125.42
Township (Archives/Maple Grove)	3,000	3,000	TOTAL Board Expenses	454.48
Columbus Foundation		500	TOTAL Building and Grounds	17,003.53
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 43,660</b>	<b>\$ 42,660</b>	Collections	26.37
<b>Expenses</b>			Grant Expenses	1,763.17
Accessions	200	\$ 1,000	Marketing:Annual Fund Raising:Postage	496.45
Archives	400	\$ 400	Membership:Postage	220.00
Board Expenses	750	\$ 700	Membership:Printing	633.33
Building and Grounds Budget	20,420	\$ 18,430	Programs:Speaker	100.00
Collections Budget	500	\$ 500	TOTAL Publication	914.73
Exhibits Budget	500	\$ 500	TOTAL Society Support (Overhead)	19,331.06
Grant Expenses	-	\$ 1,500	TOTAL EXPENSES	40,498.89
Membership	600	\$ 300	2020 Surplus	5,568.37
Museum Operations	400	\$ -		
Programs	3,000	\$ 3,000		
Publications	1,800	\$ 3,200		
Publicity	500	\$ 500		
Society Support	19,400	\$ 19,014		
Payables - payroll taxes accrued not yet paid				
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 48,470</b>	<b>\$ 49,044</b>		
<b>Excess Revenue/Expense</b>	<b>\$ (4,810)</b>	<b>\$ (6,384)</b>		

## GRANVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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# THE HISTORICAL TIMES

Celebrating its 35th year of  
publication by The Granville  
Historical Society

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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](http://Granvillehistory.org) for further information about all that we do and how you can get involved.

The Granville Historical Society

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