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125 years of telling Granville's story



Gov. Frank Lausche, third from left, was on hand for one of the more significant occasions in the Society's history — the dedication of its new home on Sept. 30, 1955, at its present location at 115 E. Broadway. Pictured from left are Mrs. H.E. Eaton; Dr. W.T. Utter, Curator; Gov. Lausche; Henry E. Eaton, Society president; Mrs. Lausche; and Mrs. Utter. *From the Granville Historical Society archives*

Part 2 of the Society's history begins on page 2

Part II: Society thriving following period of trials

By DONALD G. SCHILLING

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Following the peak of its founding in 1885, the Granville, Ohio, Historical Society, descended into the valley of inactivity, deprived of energetic leadership through the death of Charles Webster Bryant in 1886 and the departure of Frank Shepardson from Granville in 1890. Granville's splendid centennial celebration in 1905 marked the refounding of the Society and its apparent return to the heights, but just five years later a letter from Annette Persis Ward suggested that all was not right with the organization. She wrote,

What has become of the Granville Historical Society which was organized under such favorable auspices at the time of the Centennial celebration?

I am told that it is still in existence, that it holds certain funds in its possession, that its treasures are stored away. What are these funds? Where and what are the possessions? Who are the officers of the Society? How frequently and where are the meetings held? Why do the members not receive notices of these meetings and of their annual dues?

Why does Granville not appreciate its historic treasures and take from the busy Present enough time to care properly for the treasures of the Past, the loss of which would be irreparable? ¹

After a second letter to the *Granville Times*, this by Mr. A.M. Nichol, raising questions about whether the Society was adequately caring for the money received from the Centennial Association and the historical items in its possession, Kate Shepard Hines, the Society's corresponding secretary, responded on behalf of the organization.² Yes, the Society did have officers: Professor Goodell, president, Professor W. H. Johnson, secretary, and Mrs. Helen Rose, treasurer, in addition to herself. Further, the Society was in sound financial condition with the \$500 received from the centennial invested and providing the Society with \$30 per year in interest. She did not comment, however, on the issues of meetings and annual dues. Instead she stressed that "the great need of the society is a room in a good accessible place, in which to keep its collection, which would cost much more than thirty dollars a

year." Hines then documented the struggles of the Society to find a suitable storage place for the artifacts in its possession and lamented that "relics which the society should own are disappearing." To be sure, the Society had recently secured a safe space for its holdings at the home of Mary Wilson on Lancaster Road for \$24/year. Hines, however, emphasized the difficulty of expanding the collection given such circumstances and the absence of any exhibit space, wistfully commenting, "We are waiting for some lover of Granville to give us a building." ³

Marking Time, c. 1910-1941

While the Society waited for its benefactor, the problems just identified remained acute. The record is somewhat vague on the sad case of the homeless relics. Mary Wilson would continue to provide some storage until 1937; however, increasingly Clara Sinnett White and her husband Charles B. White took responsibility for finding places for a collection that, despite all obstacles, was growing. Minnie Hite Mood recalled much later,

Treasures which had accumulated as old Granville households were broken up found a place in such barns and houses as Prof. and Mrs. White found available. When their own barn was burned after being struck by lightning, the barn of course was rebuilt, but a number of antiques which had been stored in the loft were lost.

From time to time the unsued (sic) tannery on the place where I live, the ancient grist mill on what is now the golf course, and the Norton Case house, now the golf course clubhouse [at that time a building close to Newark-Granville Road] sheltered priceless machinery and implements being treasured against the day when Granville would have a museum.⁴

After the storage on the Wilson site was lost, the museum objects resided in a barn and above a millinery shop. Clara Sinnett White also used space for this purpose in the Mower house on Broadway, which she had purchased in 1937. Reportedly, Louis Reeder's garage also became a storage site.⁵

Thanks to the commitment of Mrs. White and her husband much of the collection was preserved, but the Society remained essentially inactive. The file of the



The Clouse bicycle is part of the popular basement exhibit in the Granville Historical Society's museum.

From the Granville Historical Society archives

Society's minutes in the Archives contains nothing from minutes of a meeting in 1910 until those of a meeting on November 12, 1927, when the following was noted, "[T]he original members having either died or moved away or else lost their interest in the work, the Society had been in abeyance, no meetings being held, and nothing being done except to care for what they had...." ⁶ This stood in stark contrast to the high level of civic engagement and progress stimulated by Granville's intense mobilization during the Great War and subsequently marked by the work of the Women's Federation and the Businessmen's Association.⁷ After that 1927 meeting another gap occurred until 1941. The organization did receive a significant donation when Charles Webster Bryant's genealogical records and other historical materials, held by his widow

Lorinda Munson Bryant to the time of her death in 1933, were presented by her son Fitch Bryant.⁸ *The Granville Times* mentioned the Society on a few occasions, as in 1936 and 1938, when Charles B. White reported on the Society's acquisition of several historical artifacts.⁹

The planning and implementation of the community's 125th anniversary provide telling indicators of the Society's inactive status. To be sure, the executive committee for this celebration included many of the usual suspects — Clara Sinnett White, president, and Dora Howland Case, corresponding secretary, for example — but when the committee issued the call to celebrate this anniversary on September 4-5, 1930, it did so in the name of the Community Federation of Granville Women, which had assumed the most signif-

icant role in planning, and the Granville Businessmen's Association.¹⁰ The Granville Historical Society was not mentioned in this call or in any of the publicity, program, or coverage for this event.¹¹

Rejuvenation and Realization of a Constant Hope, 1941-1956

In the spring of 1941 "a group of Granville residents interested in aiding and abetting the work now carried on by the Granville Historical Society" met in the assembly room of the Granville Public Library. Mrs. C. D. Coons, who had been active in the Community Federation and other civic organizations, was in the chair, as she noted, at "urgent recommendation of Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. White, honored members of this community, prominent civic workers, and active members of the Granville Historical Society these many years past."¹² She opened the session with the following remarks:

Quite a few people feel that the Historical Society here in Granville is not carrying on the full work that the Historical Society is supposed to do, perhaps due to the fact that it does not receive full cooperation of individuals and organizations within the village. It is not the purpose of this group to attempt in any way to replace the Granville Historical Society; rather, the main objective of this meeting is to organize a sub committee to further the activities of the Society.

After brainstorming about the tasks that the Society should be tackling, the group unanimously agreed to form a committee to advance this work. The committee planned to meet regularly on the second Monday of each month beginning on April 14th at which time a sub-committee of Donald W. Young, Dr. William T. Utter, Mrs. Fred McCollum, and Mrs. J.D. Thomson would present its report outlining "the objectives and purposes of the organization." No publicity would be printed until after the April meeting, but it was "generally agreed that the organization would be an open affair."

The April meeting was apparently successful for those involved approached the Society for membership under the leadership of William Utter, Denison history professor. The Society held the required formal meeting May 20, 1941 at the White's home.¹³ Mrs. White read the minutes of the last meeting, Nov. 12, 1927; they were approved. Then Mr. White, president,

moved quickly to the reason for the meeting, the admission of new members whose petition included the following:

We, the undersigned residents of Granville and the Granville Township, do hereby petition for membership in the Granville Ohio, Historical Society, pledging ourselves, providing our plea is granted, to abide by the rules and regulations and to carry out to the best of our ability the aims and purposes of the Granville, Ohio, Historical Society as set forth in its charter and constitution granted in 1885.

Recognizing the fact that the Society has not been fully active in recent years, it is our desire, with this new membership to further carry on the work so ably done in years past by present and former officers and members of the Society.

The small number of remaining members granted the wish of the petitioners who thus could infuse the Society with much needed energy, commitment, and vision. It seems clear that those involved in pushing for the revitalization handled what could have been a divisive issue with great delicacy. They managed on the one hand generously to acknowledge the vital contribution of the Whites for sustaining the Society and to affirm its founding purposes and significance (note the reference to the Granville, Ohio, Historical Society in their petition), while on the other hand they made it clear that to be effective the Society must sustain an active presence in the community. The potential encapsulated in these developments of 1941 would be fully realized in the mid-1950s with three major accomplishments: the opening of the Society's museum, the successful celebration of Granville's sesquicentennial, and the publication of a new history of the village.

Before the new members could translate their ambitions for the Society into action, however, the country was involved in a second world war. It required Granville's citizens to devote themselves fully to the war effort while all non-essential tasks, such as the activities of the Granville Historical Society, were put on the backburner.¹⁴ With victory in August 1945 and the transition to peacetime, Granvillians could again turn their attention to such neglected projects.

With William Utter as the temporary chairman, the Society began to hold regular meetings and at its November 27, 1945 meeting members elected permanent officers: Arthur Jones, president, James Cox, secretary, and Clara Sinnett White, treasurer. Review of

Dick Howe looks over some of the carpenter's tools in a late 1950s-era display. The collection, since rearranged, is a mainstay of the Granville Historical Society's popular basement exhibits.

— From the
*Granville Historical
Society archives*



the original constitution and by-laws of the Society “with a view for revision, or amendments” and identification of possible projects provide additional evidence that the Society was returning to health.¹⁵ The energy generated by the new members received an additional boost in October 1947 when Clark Morrow, executor of the estate of the recently deceased Clara Sinnett White, informed the Society that it would receive a substantial bequest from Mrs. White.¹⁶ In her 1945 will she had stipulated that, after bequests to other Granville organizations and institutions for a total of approximately \$32,000, the remainder of her

estate would go to the Society. She also expressed the desire “that this bequest or a portion thereof be used for erecting a suitable building to house the property now owned and thereafter to be acquired by the said Granville Historical Society.”¹⁷ With the sale of her Mt. Parnassus property for \$35,000 in September 1948 the Society knew it would receive approximately \$80,000 to acquire or build the much discussed and long desired building for a museum to house its “homeless” artifacts and archives.¹⁸

A committee of William Utter, Donald Young, and Joseph Rodes appointed to explore options for a build-

ing, identified the historic Alexandrian Bank building, used for many different purposes during its existence, as the best choice. They then secured its purchase from the Granville Public Library for \$12,500, which the Society had approved in a special meeting on December 30, 1948. As Alex Roberts, a local barber who had been cutting hair on Broadway since 1907, had his shop in this building at the time of purchase, the Society determined to provide him with space in the rear of the building to continue his business for a modest rent.¹⁹ In the early 1950s remodeling of the historic section and a rear addition featuring the Cherry Room, office and exhibit rooms as well as a useable space in the basement substantially enhanced and enlarged the building. By late 1954 Utter informed the Society that the work on the building was progressing nicely but projects still remained to be completed before the a formal dedication, which probably would be held during the sesquicentennial celebration in 1955. The construction and remodeling was fully completed by late May 1955, but Utter noted there was "still much to be done inside [to] to be ready in time for the September dedication."²⁰ Denison art historian, student of local architecture, and preservationist, Horace King worked closely with Utter to prepare the interior and install the exhibits in time for the museum's dedication and opening as part of Granville's sesquicentennial celebration.²¹

Governor assists in dedication of Society's new home

The featured event of the celebration's first day, Friday, September 30, the dedication of the Granville Historical Museum gained visibility from the presence of Governor Frank J. Lausche. After a welcome and introduction from the Society president, Henry S. Eaton, Gov. Lausche "spoke eloquently of the importance in American life of villages such as Granville." He then took the key and opened the door of the museum where he encountered the puncheon table of 1805, and likely the oldest piece of furniture made in Granville, on display along with a great variety of other items germane to the early history of the village and still on view in the museum.²² The opening of the museum gave the Granville Historical Society unprecedented attention. Located in the heart of Granville, the museum enabled the public to learn more about the community's history through public

display of its collection, now more likely to be preserved for future generations, and through additional programming.²³ Don Weaver, former editor of the *Granville Times*, provided a 1955 perspective on the museum, in his editorial for the paper's sesquicentennial edition, "The village dedicates its winsome Historical Museum, as a shrine where some of the records and the handiwork of the founders and those who came before us, can be cherished and kept."²⁴

It is indicative of the Society's return to health that in 1954 the village council asked it to assume primary responsibility for planning the sesquicentennial event. The contrast with the absence of Society participation in the 125th anniversary is striking. In their November 29th letter President Henry Eaton and Corresponding Secretary Rachael Alward issued a call to all local organizations to select delegates to participate in the committee "to instigate proceedings for the organization which will put on the Sesquicentennial of Granville, Ohio," to be supplemented by "delegates at large from among persons not necessarily affiliated with any particular organization" appointed by Eaton.²⁵ About 100 persons were selected to do this initial planning. They created the Granville Sesquicentennial Association, under the leadership of William Utter, honorary chairman, and Thomas Price and Mary Kay Larimer, co-chairs, with twenty-five specific committees ranging from those for finance to dramatics to the Welsh Hills tour and over two-hundred persons involved. Their diligent preparation resulted in a highly successful sesquicentennial celebration on the weekend of September 30-October 2, 1955. Governor Lausche served as Grand Marshal for the obligatory parade; five dramatic episodes from Granville's past were staged under the direction of Denison theatre professors Ed Wright and William Brasmer; the community birthday party was celebrated with square dancing in the Denison Field House; and the weekend concluded as 4,000 gathered for a community worship service on the lawn of the Presbyterian Church and spilled across the town square where they heard the words originally preached by the Rev. Timothy Mather Cooley in 1805, delivered by his descendant, Bradley Stevenson.²⁶

The triad of achievements marking the mid-1950s was completed in 1956 when the Granville Historical Society and Denison jointly published William T. Utter's *Granville: The Story of an Ohio Village*, a fit-



Dick Mahard is pictured at the dedication of the Ohio Historical Marker at Society's Old Academy Building.

— *From the Granville Historical Society archives*

ting tribute to the 150 year existence of this special community. Utter's work quickly replaced the 1889 study of Henry Bushnell, itself an outgrowth of the 75th anniversary and the founding of the Society in 1885, as the most read and consulted source for our local history. While Utter's book focused primarily on the founding and 19th century history of Granville, treating the period after 1905 only briefly in a concluding chapter, "Patterns of Village Life," it remains a popular choice for those wishing to learn more about the community's past.

With its new museum, prominent role in the sesqui-centennial, and an excellent narrative history of the

village, the Granville Historical Society seemed poised, for the first time in its history, to fulfill fully the hopes of its founders and goals of its charter. Such optimism was natural, but for a small organization with limited financial resources and no professional staff challenges continued to exist and old patterns proved difficult to alter. The notice for the Society's annual meeting of February 24, 1956, perceptively acknowledged the challenge, "Since with the completion of the Museum and the Sesqui-centennial (sic) Celebration over, the Society is now entering a new phase with increased responsibilities as well as possibilities." 27

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: 1956-1982

By the early 1960s the responsibilities were obviously weighing heavily on the Society. Key members, who had done much of the heavy-lifting during the previous two decades, had not been able to sustain their efforts and were ready for new leaders to step forward. The decline in Society activity in the late 1950s was such that articles in the *Booster* in May 1961 noted the need for "extensive interior and exterior refurbishing of the Museum" as well as for the "reorganization" and "reactivation" of the Society. New officers, headed by Calvin Prine as president, were recruited in April to lead that process.²⁸ A brief burst of activity followed: membership records were updated, the committee structure revived, and public programs held, but a letter from President William Stewart to the members in the fall of 1964 began, "I agree with you that the Historical Society has had too few meetings during the past year, and that it might well have been more active than it has been."²⁹ In addition to the slump in programming the Society faced a financial challenge of over unpaid back taxes. Dick Howe, a key figure in sustaining the operation of the museum in the 1960s and 1970s, recalled this incident several years later, "Shortly after 1965, Clark Morrow came to me ... saying the county was going to put the Museum up for sale for non-payment of taxes and that we'd better do something." Howe followed up by going to Newark to meet with county officials and then, joined by Jim Remmele, went to Columbus to see the state tax commissioner. He was able to get the situation sorted out and all back taxes were rescinded except for those owed on the income from Alex Robert's barbershop in the rear of the museum building. It was fortuitous as Howe noted, "Shortly after that a new law was passed so taxes couldn't be rescinded for more than a year or two, so the Historical Society got a break there."³⁰

Despite this resolution in the mid-1960s, the organization was confronted with more tax issues in 1971 when the Society discovered that it lacked tax-exempt status as "no exemption application for our corporation had ever been filed. Furthermore, we were advised that the society had never filed a return on I.R.S. Form No. 990, which is required annually." As a result the Society was liable for the payment of federal taxes. To achieve compliance, the Society's Board of Trustees filed the necessary paper work with the IRS and com-

missioned an audit of its financial records from June 31, 1948 to August 31, 1971 by Harold Crim. The audit was partial as the records were limited to "A Receipts and Disbursements Book" and assorted paper records in the absence of a formal ledger; however, Crim observed, "The auditing procedures and tests that we applied did not indicate the need to go beyond the tests that we used." He concluded his report by offering "high commendation to all past and present officers and employees." As Crim's report implies, the difficulties regarding record keeping and tax status were not the product of negligence but rather a consequence of a volunteer leadership not fully informed of its responsibilities, marked at points by a lack of continuity, and carrying on with practices that were no longer in compliance with tax and record keeping requirements.³¹

In the midst of these tax issues, one of Granville's historic buildings, the Old Academy Building (OAB), on the southwest corner of Main and Elm came into the Society's possession in 1973. Since its construction in 1833 by the Congregational (the present Presbyterian) Church as Granville's Female Academy, the building had served as a male academy (1838-1863), the Welsh Congregational Church (1863-1923), and the Grange hall. Formed in 1919 the Granville chapter of the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, purchased the building in 1923 and used it extensively for the next four decades. By the early 1970s, however, the declining farm population and rising state dues led to the sale of OAB to the Society for a reported \$1,000. The Grange retained the right to use the building as long as it continued to function. This transfer of property between the Grange and the Society seems to have been entirely due to William Richards, local Granville engineer and farmer, officer in the Grange and president of the Society since 1970.³² Richard and Marian Mahard, whose home lay immediately west of the OAB, came to have particular affection for both the building and the Society. They provided special care for the building during their lives and insured its long-term health with generous bequests to support the upkeep of the building from their estate in 2007 and 2008.

Employed for a variety of uses including meetings, programs, limited exhibits of the Society, church services, and occasional meetings by other organizations, the OAB has recently undergone major renovations and upgrades to make it more suitable as a museum

exhibit and storage space.³³

Despite the acquisition of the OAB, the Society slipped into a period of limited activity during the 1970s. While President Richards maintained the essential functions of the organization, including an annual dinner event, the Board of Managers seldom met and the museum, whose exhibits had not changed in years, had a declining number of visitors. As no organized docent program existed, it was only opened irregularly. It would take an unfortunate and near fatal crisis in the early 1980s to force reform and shake the Society out of its doldrums.

While the crisis was multidimensional, at its core was the failure of the Board of Managers to maintain active oversight over the affairs of the Society. At least in part this was likely the function of President Richards' leadership style, as he took it upon himself to run the Society without involving the board, whose members seemed all too willing to let him assume that responsibility. As this pattern intensified during the 1970s, the normal structures and procedures of sound organizational and financial management atrophied. It took a membership issue to precipitate the crisis.

At a meeting of the Society on May 25, 1982, the membership applications of three Granville residents, Betty Grudin, Gordon Condit, and Harry Nix failed to receive the unanimous approval required under the 1885 constitution. In popular parlance they had been "blackballed." Betty Grudin, an outspoken local activist, refused to accept such action without a challenge. She wrote letters to the editors of several area newspapers and reportedly was also taking her case to state and federal authorities. The Society suddenly found itself the center of negative publicity as the *Granville Sentinel*, the *Newark Advocate*, the *Columbus Dispatch*, and the *Licking Countian* all provided coverage of the unfolding developments.³⁴ The story was doubly potent because in addition to the blackball issue, word was out that the Society had failed to file reports with the state's Charitable Trust and Foundation Act and with the Internal Revenue Service. The treasurer, Glenn Wince, apparently had failed to file the necessary paper work with both the Attorney General's office and the IRS going back to 1975. The *Columbus Dispatch* reported that the Society's tax exempt status had been revoked in 1979 and the IRS was continuing to investigate what might be owed in delinquent taxes and possible penalties.³⁵



Tony Lisska (far right) represented the Granville Historical Society at the New Year's Eve dedication of the Rotary Clock, a part of the 2005 bicentennial observance.

With the pot boiling, other complaints surfaced: accurate membership lists were lacking, financial records were unavailable (both of these in violation of the Ohio Revised Code), the museum was not open on a regular schedule, its collection had not been adequately catalogued, and insurance policies had not been maintained on the museum and Old Academy buildings. While Richards admitted that many of these concerns were valid, he told the *Sentinel*, "You have just a couple of people who are trying to tear it [the Society] apart."³⁶

The atmosphere must have been strained when the Board of Managers met for the first time in years on June 10th to deal with the crisis. Rob Drake, who had recently been approached by Richards to serve as vice-president, was asked to preside at the meeting. A local lawyer and highly respected in the community, Drake put his training to good use in explaining the Society's tax problems to the board and helping it map out a strategy to compile the necessary delinquent paper work for the Attorney General's office under the provisions of the Charitable Trust Act, sort out the Society's confused financial picture, authorize the necessary insurance, and secure McLeish, Bowman & Co. Public Accountants to audit the Society's books from May 31, 1973 to Dec. 31, 1981. In addition Drake urged "immediate action on some membership requirement change in order to show the community that the Society is trying to get its house in order" and proposed several constitutional changes to that effect, which the board adopted.³⁷ Before these membership changes could be submitted to the Society's members for a vote, Drake discovered that the Society had adopted a revised constitution in 1949, which essentially provided "that anyone interested in the purposes of the organization and who pays dues can be a member."³⁸ The 1949 version was accepted as the operative constitution for the Society and thus the "black-balls" became invalid. Grudin, Condit, and Nix were offered membership and received letters of apology from the Society.³⁹ After further revision during the summer, including a provision to limit a president's term to no more than two consecutive years, the 1949 constitution was approved by vote of the members in September 1982. This constitution underwent minor revision in the 1990s but in its essential features it continues to govern the operations of the Society.

Under its provisions members of the Society elected

new officers in April 1983 with Rob Drake, who had been chairing the Board of Managers, selected president, Fanchion Lewis, vice-president; Jeane Randolph, secretary; and Carl Frazier, treasurer. For the first time in recent memory expired terms for the Board of Managers were filled through election rather than appointment.⁴⁰ With key positions in capable hands, the Society was returning to organizational health; however, the outstanding tax issues were not susceptible of quick resolution.

The auditors completed their interim report covering the period May 1973 to May 1981 in September 1982 allowing the board to forward it and additional paper work to the Attorney General's office the following month. Progress then stalled, first, because the auditors could not complete their work on 1982 due to some incomplete records, and, second, due to state elections and a change in the Attorney General and key office personnel. The Society finally received the auditors' full report in September 1983 and was able to respond to the request of the Attorney General's office for this report and various additional records, which were also forwarded to the IRS resulting in the restoration of its tax exempt status after the payment of back taxes and interest of over \$2,000. The Society had faced potential additional penalties from the IRS of over \$10,000, but Drake's thorough, thoughtful letter of November 4, 1983, to the District Director of the IRS had the desired effect of getting those penalties waived. In the letter Drake concluded, "The persons who served the Society as its officers were not bad people, nor did they abuse the Society in any way for their own benefit. They did fail to comprehend the risk to the long run future of the Society which they ran by failing to see to the fulfillment of its legal obligations."⁴¹

Despite moving toward the resolution of these taxing issues, the Society faced one more item of negative publicity in the summer of 1983 when the following headline appeared in the *Sentinel*: "Missing Collection Stirs Questions Again Inside The Granville Historical Society." The story concerned the fate of the barbed-wire collection of Eurie Loughridge, given to the Society by her brother Charles after her death. Queried about the matter, Rob Drake admitted he did not know what happened to it, as it was before his involvement with the Society. He commented, "We were told officially that the barbed-wire had been thrown away (but rumors say it is [in] existence."⁴² He subsequently in-

vestigated and reported to the Board of Managers that the barbed wire had been disposed of after it had been stored in the museum for over a year. The board then adopted a resolution that read in part, "...[T]he Board is certain that the wire is lost and cannot be retrieved. Paul Quisenberry, a member of the Board, has apologized personally to Mr. Loughridge and to the Society for the difficulties caused by his mistake in judgment as to the handling of this item. The Society has also extended its apology to Mr. Loughridge and ... [he] has been assured that such a practice will not be repeated under present accession rules." ⁴³

A Record of Achievement, 1983 to the Present

The discovery of questionable practices in the early 1980s shocked many in the Society, but one discovery proved a great boon to Granville history. This time the *Sentinel* headline proclaimed, "Archives Investigation Unearths Wealth of Historically Significant Documents, Photographs, Registers Tucked Away in Society Museum." The story went on to report in detail on the rich resources documenting the settlement and 19th century history of Granville found "locked away in the museum's basement" and noted, "The society plans to catalogue the material and make it available for public viewing and use."⁴⁴ Recruited in a voluntary capacity to organize and catalogue these materials, Florence Hoffman, then Denison University's archivist, took up this work with a dedication and professionalism that has remained unflagging to the present day. As the archives became useable and a source of interest for those in the community and beyond who wished, for example, to research the history of their homes or family genealogies, the Society renovated the rear section of the museum to provide a proper room for these priceless materials. At the annual meeting in April 1987, Flo Hoffman received the Historian of the Year award from the Society for her outstanding service as archivist. In his report at that meeting President Tony Stoneburner was also pleased to note "the momentum that [the Society] has gained from the effort to regularize its legal status and celebrate its hundredth birthday."⁴⁵ Another indicator of that momentum came later in the year when the board enthusiastically endorsed a mock-up of the first issue of *The Historical Times*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Oct. 1987.⁴⁶

This quarterly newsletter would publish a treasure trove of articles on local history over the years and continues to be a vital part of the Society's efforts to make the past available to the public.

By the end of the 1980s the Society was a stable, well-functioning entity, yet in a memo to the Board of Managers President Eric Jones challenged the Board of Managers to consider "whether to continue the activities of the Society more or less as they have been in the past few years or to change the level of activity or the focus of our efforts." Jones went on to suggest that the Society had not adjusted to having two other museums in the community, had a small, static membership base, was overly reliant on a few volunteers who spent a great deal of time working on its behalf, and needed a more active program accompanied by effective publicity. In sum, he said, "We are perceived as a largely inactive organization" ... with "the museum that is always closed."⁴⁷ The board wrestled with these issues and did respond. By 1990, for example, Harold "Buck" Sargent, an extremely dedicated member of the board, had recruited Dorothy Garrett to organize a docent program enabling the Society to better staff the museum and expand the hours of opening. Working with the newly elected president, Dick Shiels, Garrett developed training materials, recruited new docents, ran training workshops, and organized the work schedules for these volunteers. These efforts resulted in a museum more regularly open on Fridays and Saturdays from mid-April to mid-October and better prepared to make the experience a rewarding one for visitors. ⁴⁸

As the 1990s progressed, the energies of the Society were increasingly channeled into the planning for the 2005 Granville Bicentennial. In the early 1990s Tony Stoneburner conceived the idea for an ambitious publishing project to produce a new history of Granville. While recognizing that William Utter's sesquicentennial volume would remain a valued resource, Stoneburner knew that it had limitations especially in its failure to treat the history of Native Americans in the region before the founding of Granville, its cursory examination of Granville in the first half of the 20th century, and its obvious inability to address the history of the second half of the 20th century.

With Society support and a committee in place to help move this project from vision to reality, recruitment began in 1995 for the authors and editors of what

would become a three volume set entitled *Granville, Ohio: A Study in Continuity and Change*.⁴⁹ The results of almost a decade of work were proudly revealed on December 4, 2004, during the Candlelight Walking Tour when the handsome suite of three volumes went on sale. This award winning set consisted of: Vol. I, *A Purpose, A Plan, A Place* — the multi-authored, comprehensive narrative history of Granville, edited by Anthony Lisska and Louis Middleman; Vol. II, *Reflections and Impressions* — with nine original essays on features of Granville life plus reprints of relevant selections from *The Historical Times* and *The Granville Times*, edited by Clarke Wilhelm; and Vol. III, *Images Past and Present* — a topically organized set of images and photographs with accompanying text, edited by Theresa Overholser and Florence Hoffman. Thanks to the Historical Society's vision and the countless hours logged by many volunteers Granville had accessible new histories suitable for a 21st century audience.⁵⁰

In addition to this major publishing effort the Historical Society played a central role in the more general planning for the bicentennial. In 1997 under the leadership of Dick Daley, who was then the president of the Society, meetings were held with representatives of the Robbins Hunter and the Robinson Life Style museums to determine "how best to plan and carry out an appropriate and fitting celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of Granville." The result was the creation of the Granville 20005 Bicentennial Commission, chaired by Daley. After commission presentations to the Granville Township Trustees and the Granville Village Council, these bodies passed a resolution in February 1999 to make the commission "the designated community body to direct, coordinate, and oversee all aspects of a year long Granville Community Bicentennial Celebration."⁵¹ In addition to Daley, members initially included Amy Deeds, Flo Hoffman, Gloria Hoover, Tony Lisska, Theresa Overholser and Mary Lee VanMeter with Sherry Paprocki and Anne Ormond added later. Most readers of this piece will vividly recall the many significant community events planned and implemented or coordinated by the commission throughout more than a year of commemoration.⁵² The past was remembered and recreated, present achievements of the village acclaimed, and new memories fashioned for future Granvillians to recall.

That the Society played a central role in many of these events reemphasizes its symbiotic relationship with Granville and its historic milestones. Recall that the 75th anniversary of the village had been the stimulus for the Society's founding and subsequent anniversaries often reenergized it. If between bursts of activity associated with such events, the Society was at times quiescent that is perhaps to be expected of an all volunteer organization with minimal resources. That it has endured and more for 125 years and marks the end of 2010 with an ambitious agenda for the future and a renewed commitment "to preserving, protecting, interpreting, showcasing, and celebrating the rich cultural and diverse heritage of Granville for the community and visitors..." is an achievement to be honored and celebrated.⁵³

FOOTNOTES

¹GT, 11/10/1910, p. 1. Ms. Ward was a 1906 member of the Society and the Librarian of the Western Reserve Historical Society in Cleveland.

²GT, 12/8/1910, p. 1.

³GT, 12/22/1910, p. 1.

⁴Newark Advocate, 1/25/1969, Column "I Remember, I Remember: A Few of the Workers". In the second paragraph Moody is probably referring to storage on the Sinnett farm, then owned by Mrs. White's mother, in the period up to c. 1922.

⁵*Ibid.* Also GT, 9/30/1955, p. 1; Special Sesquicentennial Edition and GHS Archives, Box 83-036 (Minutes 1907-2003), File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), Nov. 12, 1927.

⁶GHS Archives, Box 83-036 (Minutes 1907-2003), File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), Nov. 12, 1927. At this meeting Charles B. White was elected president, Clara Sinnett White treasurer, and Kate Shepard Hines secretary of the Society.

⁷See, Anthony Lisska & Louis Middleman, eds., *Granville, Ohio: A Study in Continuity and Change*. Vol. I, Chapter VI, by Donald Schilling. He presents powerful examples of this civic engagement including the fund raising for and building of the Granville Public Library in which Clara Sinnett White played a major role.

⁸GT, 9/30/1955, p. 1; Special Sesquicentennial Edition, Leora Norris Shepardson, "Early Historical Society's Hopes Finally Realized."

⁹GT, 7/2/1936, p. 4; and GT, 7/14/1938, p. 2

¹⁰GHS Archives, Box 83-036: Anniversaries 125th-175th File: Anniversaries 125th, 1930, Letter of invitation for the 125th Anniversary.

¹¹The program featured addresses by Ohio Governor Myers

Cooper and by Charles B. White on "The Puritanism of the Granville Pioneers," a parade (if the Society had a float it was not explicitly mentioned), historical pageant with music, a religious service, and an exchange of greetings between Granville, Mass. and Granville, Ohio by telephone.

¹²GHS Archives, Box 83-036 (Minutes 1907-2003), File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), MINUTES: SUB COMMITTEE OF GRANVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Organization session, March 27, 1941. Invitations were extended to 25 persons; 14 attended. All subsequent quotes in this paragraph come from these minutes.

¹³GHS Archives, Box 83-036 (Minutes 1907-2003), File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), Minutes of Meeting of May 20, 1941. All subsequent material in this paragraph comes from these minutes.

¹⁴For a discussion of Granville's experience during WW II see, Anthony Lisska & Louis Middleman, eds., *Granville, Ohio: A Study in Continuity and Change*. Vol. I, pp. 401-446, by Donald Schilling.

¹⁵GHS Archives, Box 83-036, Minutes 1907-2003, File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), Minutes of Nov. 27, 1945.

¹⁶GHS Archives, Box 83-036 (Building Records, Financial Records, 1961 Records), File: Minutes 1947-1957, Minutes of Oct. 1, 1947.

¹⁷*Ibid*, Copy of Last Will and Testament of Clara A. White, 20 November 1945.

¹⁸*Ibid*, Minutes of Sept. 13, 1948 and Oct. 15, 1948.

¹⁹*Ibid*, Minutes of May 16, 1950; also GT, 12/2/1937, p. 2.

²⁰*Ibid*, Minutes of Nov. 14, 1954 and May 26, 1955.

²¹Utter, pp. 322-23; also Leora Norris Shepardson, "The Granville Historical Society," (3 page typescript, July 1955), p. 3; Florence Hoffman, "Brief History of the Granville, Ohio, Historical Society," (5 page typescript prepared for presentation to the Society, Oct. 16, 1995), p. 3.

²²Utter, pp. 322-23.

²³While the museum held archival materials, they had not been appropriately catalogued and thus were not publically accessible. This problem was not remedied until Flo Hoffman brought her knowledge and skills as an archivist to the Society in the mid-1980s and a room was built in the museum to house the archives.

²⁴GT, 9/30/1955, p. 2.

²⁵GHS Archives, Box 83-037, Anniversaries 125th 175th, File: Anniversaries 150th 1955, copy of Letter of Henry E. Eaton & Rachel K. Alward sent to the presidents of various organizations, Nov. 29, 1954.

²⁶GHS Archives, Box 83-037, Anniversaries 125th -175th, File: Anniversaries 150th 1955.

²⁷GHS Archives, Box 83-036, File-GHS Correspondence

Outgoing, 1885-

²⁸*Ibid.*, Press releases for the Booster, May 11, 1961

²⁹GHS Archives, Box 83-036: Building Records, Financial Records, 1961 Records, Letter of October 22, 1964.

³⁰*Ibid.*, File: Minutes, Addendum to the minutes of the Board of Managers meeting of August 5, 1982

³¹GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Audits and Taxes, "Granville Ohio Historical Society, Audit Report, June 31, 1948-August 31, 1971." The report included a balance sheet with a Funds balance of \$118,175.51 with the largest amounts resulting from bequests by Clara A. White of \$85,756.20 and Charles Fitch Bryant of \$29,675, which had come to the Society in 1964.

³²GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Minutes, minutes of the Board of Managers for Sept. 1, 1983, reported, "Bud Abbott has talked with William T. Richards about the acquisition of the Grange Hall and learned the Society did make the purchase. However, it was through the efforts of Mr. Richards that the purchase was possible. The secretary found no details of money expended in the transaction recorded in the minutes of 1972 and 1973."

³³The Mahard bequests paid for significant maintenance-slate roof repair, fascia repair, gutter work, and a new interior paint job costing more than \$12,000, while a grants for \$7,000 and \$2,500 from the Village of Granville and the Energy Cooperative's Operation Roundup Foundation paid for a new heating and cooling system, insulation, interior storm windows, and more minor enhancements.

³⁴GHS Archives, uncatalogued box of newspaper clippings from these papers. For example, *Granville Sentinel*, June 6, 1982, Headline, "Historical Society Rocks With Controversy After Blackballing;" *Columbus Dispatch*, June 10, 1982, "Historical society loses tax exemption;" *Licking Countian*, June 10, 1982, p. "Granville Historical Society Blackball Rolling;" *Newark Advocate*, July 8, 1982, "Granville resolves members issue." Subsequent references to news stories refer to items in this box,

³⁵June 10, 1982; also *Granville Sentinel*, June 6, 1982.

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Minutes, minutes of the Board of Managers for June 10, 1982.

³⁸*Newark Advocate*, July 8, 1982, "Granville resolves members issue"

³⁹GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Minutes, minutes of the Board of Managers for September 2, 1982.

⁴⁰*Granville Sentinel*, April 21, 1983, the article bore this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

A message from our Society's leadership

Dear Members,

At last spring's annual meeting the Board of Managers reported that we were beginning to pursue the possibilities of an addition to our museum building. We have received generous contributions of collections, paper records and money from the Hubert & Oese Robinson Trust. We are in the process of both additional fundraising and designing the addition, which will be the Robinson Research Center.

We can hardly tell you how exciting this is for those of us who work regularly in the museum and archives. We have been complaining for some years that there was nowhere to put new acquisitions. The items that have come from the Life-Style Museum make that an even more pressing issue. As we have been working on the design for the addition with a terrific volunteer committee, we have been imagining what this extra space makes possible.

We are proposing a two-story addition, with a basement, to be built behind the museum. The top floor will house storage, work space and a reading room for visitors to the archives, while the basement will be storage for museum artifacts. The ground floor will include exhibit space and lecture space for us to host programs and school groups. By moving the archives out of the current museum building, we will also be freeing up exhibition space in the museum so we will have the opportunity of completely changing the current exhibitions.

We see this addition as a huge leap forward in enabling us to realize our mission in the 21st century in exemplary fashion just as the current museum building took us from a collection without a place to a 20th century museum. We will be able to better preserve our records and artifacts, and make them available through expanded exhibitions and research workspaces. Most importantly, we will be able to enhance the community's awareness of our history through a robust, imaginative set of programs conducted in the museum for chil-

Mission of the Granville Historical Society

As the community's collective memory, the Granville Historical Society acquires, preserves, and shares Granville's past with residents and visitors to inspire an awareness of local history.



Granville Historical Society museum, today (top) and in 1967.

dren, tour groups, other special groups and the general public. We are full of exciting presentation ideas and ways to engage Granville.

We will continue our active program of publications and expanding our web presence, as well as the valuable docent/volunteer training program. We will increase our open hours and access, and broaden the base of our committed volunteers.

In short, this building project creates the context to alter the perception of the Granville Historical Society from operating "the museum that is never open" to being a vibrant center for the historical study of Granville and its environs. Please join us in all of these exciting efforts.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Cort, President

Don Schilling, Vice President

Centenary United Methodist Church marks bicentennial

The Bicentennial of Centenary United Methodist Church is a part of the Heritage of Granville. Following is a history of the church written for its bicentennial observance this year, written by Sandra Nihiser.

The Centenary United Methodist Church of 2010 has a rich history in Granville, celebrated in its bicentennial year.

Who would have believed that 200 years ago the corner lot set aside by village founders “for the public good” would become the location of this beautiful church with the lovely stained glass windows, a place of worship and base for community service? It began with a small group of like-minded people. They came together in classes to learn how to live good, God-fearing lives, meeting in homes and a school until they could build a church.

Each addition to the church structure was a response to the growing church family in need of space for worship and activities with plans for the future. The addition of the contemporary service in 1999 and growing youth program created need for more classes and a larger chancel. This led to the 2003 building project with Shepherd Hall (named for the Good Shepherd window) and the renovation of the education building. The elevator allows access to all areas of the church.

In 1960, there was no longer room for Sunday school classes, even though two houses nearby were purchased for that purpose. The Linden Place lots would later become the parking lot so badly needed in the village. The 1965 Education unit became a reality with Harold “Buck” Sargent as the overseer. Many volunteer hours were given by loyal members. The basement was dug out in 1956 to create space for a kitchen, fellowship center, two additional rooms and furnace area.

The leaders of the Granville Methodist Church seriously considered building a new church in 1924 as there were many problems with the 60-year-old church. With little fanfare, the new church idea was discarded and a major remodeling began. The most obvious change was the removal of the large steeple which had become rotten and dangerous. Thirty-four stained glass windows were installed and many other changes took place to adapt to the needs of the time.

The 1884 brick Methodist Episcopal Church was a work of love and devotion. Members donated their time, wood for the pews and wainscoting, bricks, and



A photo of the church in 1884, from the Centenary United Methodist Church archives.

furnishings. It had been 60 years since the first church was built and the congregation needed more space. The frame of the church was built quickly, but the inside and finish work was slower in completion, causing the dedication of the church to be delayed until late in 1884. Methodism had been in Granville 74 years.

Looking further back into the church’s history, the very first Methodist church building was built on the northeast corner of the village square property in 1824. The site was originally a small lake or swamp. There was room on the same lot for the community building. There were galleries in the church, but no heat. The winter months presented a problem, so the congregation met in other places of warmth.

As the village of Granville was established, there were no active Methodist churches or members. The denomination was not well received. That did not deter the Circuit Riders who appeared in town in 1809. There is some question as to whether Robert Cloud or James Finley was the first to preach as a Methodist. What matters is that the message was received and Methodists in Granville had their beginning.

FOOTNOTES — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

headline: “Historical Society Changes Leadership Elects Drake President”

⁴¹GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Minutes, minutes of the Board of Managers for September 2, 1982; Oct. 14, 1982; Nov. 4, 1982; Dec. 2, 1982; Sept. 1, 1983; and copy of letter from Drake to District Manager, IRS, Cincinnati, Nov. 4, 1983. The resolution of the tax exempt status, back taxes owed, and possible penalties was entirely in the purview of the IRS as they were a matter of Federal tax law. As recalled by Drake, “The AG expected us to get our tax house in order with the IRS, but played no part in the actual determination of our status.” (E-mail communication to the author, 11/15/2010)

⁴²August 18, 1983.

⁴³GHS Archives, Box 83-036: 1983 Reorganization, File-Minutes, minutes of the Board of Managers for September 1, 1983.

⁴⁴*The Granville Sentinel*, January 13, 1983.

⁴⁵GHS Archives, Box 83-036, Minutes 1907-2003, File: Minutes 1907-1989 (incomplete), Presidential Report, 1986-7, April 9, 1987.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, Minutes of Oct. 1, 1987.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, Memo for October 16, 1989 Board Meeting

⁴⁸Phone interviews with Richard Shiels, 10/30/2010 and Dorothy Garrett, 11/3/2010. Despite the able work of Garrett and her successors Gay Weinberg, Maggie Brooks, and Virginia Gerseny the docent program would remain a challenge, especially for the volunteer coordinator. In the aftermath of the Bicentennial the Society made the decision to hire a part time docent coordinator to support the docent program.

⁴⁹A brief history of this project, which benefitted from the dedicated and inspired work of editors, authors, project managers, and committee members, is recorded in Vol. I, *A Purpose, A Plan, A Place*, pp. 520-22, so I will not repeat it here.

⁵⁰In addition to the publication of these histories, the Society had successfully completed the publication of: a new edition of Ellen Hayes', *Wild Turkeys and Tallow Candles: Growing up in Granville Before the Civil War* (Granville, OH: Granville Historical Society, 2004); Ann Natalie Hansen, ed., *Unhitch the Horse, I'm Here!: Memories of Mary Fitch* (Granville, OH: Granville Historical Society, 2007); Theresa Overholser and Anthony J. Lisska, eds., *Jacob Little's History of Granville* (Granville, OH: Granville Historical Society, 2009). The Society also offered photographs and support for Janet Philipps Procida's *The Welsh Hills* (Images of America Series), (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2010)

⁵¹GHS Archives, Box 83-037, Anniversaries 200th, File: 200th 2005, Resolution No. 99-05. Resolution in Support of Establishing the Granville 2005 Bicentennial Commission.

⁵²For those whose memories need prodding please see, Anthony J. Lisska, “A History of the 2005 Bicentennial Commission,” in the pamphlet prepared for the Bicentennial Celebration Finale, Dec. 4, 2005.

⁵³The quote from the Proclamation of the Granville Village Council, signed by Mayor Melissa Hartfield, May 5, 2010 in recognition of the Society's 125th Anniversary.



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