

Medina County



John Smart House

206 N. Elmwood Medina Ohio 44256
www.medinacountyhistoricalsociety.com
mchs@zoominternet.net
Established 1922



McDowell-Phillips House

We made it through the winter season with minor issues. That cold snap on Christmas Eve froze the kitchen pipes at the McDowell-Phillips House Museum and caused some minor gutter damage, but otherwise we made it in good shape. Work will continue on the exterior of the house. We trenched electric lines to the barn, so lights and outlets will be available. The exterior architectural lighting on the main house was installed a few weeks ago and looks great. Drive by between dusk and dawn to see for yourself.

The Wichert Insurance Agency of Medina will dedicate a “day of service” with their staff to scrape the old peeling paint on the war bond building once carpentry work is complete. We plan to improve the rear landscape when the weather allows.

A beautiful entry sign to be located near the Prospect Street entrance was approved by the Historic Preservation Board and should be installed by June.

Our Trustees will undergo CPR and AED training by the Medina Fire Department. We are fortunate that the Cleveland Clinic will reimburse us for two AED devices (about \$3600) as a gift so we are better prepared in the event someone at our museums has a medical emergency.

(continued on page 2)

2023 Officers	Board Members	Emeritus Members
Brian Feron-President	Mary Jo Palmer, Pieri Levandofsky	Joann King
Open-Vice President	Lila Lehrer, Judy Davanzo, Chet Simmons	Richard Clark
Mike Davanzo-Secretary	Andrea Spickler, Beth Biggins-Ramer	Tom Hilberg
Carole Feron-Treasurer	Charles Ramer, Bill Parker, Dave Arbogast	

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P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

(continued from page 1)

Our society is being inducted into the Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame on Friday, June 23rd from 6-9 p.m. at the Blair Conference Center in Westfield. This is a very special honor and reflects the economic as well as cultural contributions museums create when visitors come and support the local economy. I believe it is the first time MCHS has received such a distinction. You can obtain information by contacting Jaclyn Ringstmeier at 330-723-8773 or jaclyn@medinaohchamber.com.

Grade school tours have resumed and we have quite a few 3rd grade students visiting the John Smart House Museum in May. These are fun events as you never know what they may say when they see some of our artifacts. Bus tours have also been scheduled now that many have resumed operations.

On a sad note, we lost two longtime supporters: Don Canfield and Virginia Jeandrevin. Don Canfield was an active member and trustee for many years. His wise counsel was always appreciated. Virginia Jeandrevin was so well known and active it is hard to summarize all her contributions to our community. She always took time to listen and was a great supporter of our museums. They will both be missed.

The board has been busy lining up the activities for the balance of the year. We had a great Trivia night fundraiser and wonderful programs for our members and guests. We have more nice events planned and details will be coming via email.

Brian Feron, President

S A V E T H E D A T E M E E T I N G S & P R O G R A M S

There is a lot going on in the month of May at Medina County Historical Society! Below is information on each event. We hope to see you there!

Yard Sale - Saturday, May 6, 9am - 3pm

The Medina County Historical Society will hold our Spring Yard Sale on the front yard of the McDowell-Phillips House Museum, 205 S. Prospect St., Medina.

Rain Date: May 7



S A V E T H E D A T E M E E T I N G S & P R O G R A M S

(Yard Sale information continued from page 2)

Reminder no parking on Blake Ave. Nearby street parking available on W. Washington St. and Liberty Row parking lot W. Liberty, and on east side of Prospect parking area next to railroad tracks.

John Smart House Museum Open House, Sunday, May 7th, 1pm - 4pm

The Medina County Historical Society will hold an Open House at the John Smart House Museum, 206 N. Elmwood, Medina, on Sunday, May 7th from 1pm – 4pm. This will be a self-guided tour of the museum. There will be docents in various locations throughout the museum to answer questions and provide some interesting facts. Admission donation prices are \$5 for adults, \$4 for Seniors, \$3 for Students 7 – 18. Children under 7 are free with a hand-holding adult. NEW in 2023 - MCHS members receive a discount! If you have any questions, please call 330-722-1341 or email mchs@zoominternet.net. We hope to see you at the museum!

May Membership meeting Monday, May 8, 6:30 PM**Button, button, who's got the buttons?**

Emilie Collens Illson of Button Down Designs does!

Medina County Historical Society will hold its May membership meeting on Monday, May 8th from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room A/B at the Medina County Library, 210 South Broadway Street, Medina, to learn about the little gems (buttons) that are hiding in your button box at home.

The presentation is educational, entertaining, and very hands-on. Emilie will focus on 9 different types of antique buttons: Bone, Vegetable Ivory, Porcelain, Tin, Painted Wood, Bison Horn, Mother-of-Pearl, Celluloid, and Bakelite. For each type she will show items made of that same material and period appropriate house-hold items made of the same material. The objects are Museum-quality artifacts, collected over a forty-year period. They are as old as the buttons which accompany them, 1840's to 1940's. The items will be explained with an opportunity to examine up close. After 12 years in business, Emilie has designed and sewn over 5000 bracelets. Two National Museum Shops have carried her work, the Museum of American Folk Art, in Manhattan, and the Museum of Women in the Arts, in D.C. This meeting is free and open to the public. We hope to see you there!

June members only meeting

Will be held at the Wolff Dairy Farm on Wolff Road. More details will be sent via email.

SAVE THE DATE MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

(continued from page 3)

McDowell-Phillips House Museum Open House, Sunday, May 21, 1pm - 4pm

The Medina County Historical Society will have the first Open House of the year at the McDowell-Phillips House Museum, 205 S. Prospect St., Medina on Sunday, May 21 from 1pm - 4pm. This is a guided tour through the Museum. Admission donation prices are \$10 for Adults, \$9 for Seniors, \$7 for Youth 8 - 18 years and 7 years of age and under are free with hand-holding adult. New in 2023 - MCHS members receive a discount! Parking is available on the property and surrounding streets and lots - watch for signs. Please do not park on Blake Ave. Any questions please call 330-722-1341 or email us at mchs@zoominternet.net. We hope to see you at the museum!

2023 Raffles announced!!

Our traditional Victorian Feast Raffle tickets, an elegant dinner for 4, will once again be sold through December and the dinner to be held in February of 2024. Prices will remain the same as this past year, \$5 each or 4 for \$15. Two winners will be selected for this raffle.

Our Grand Raffle will have a \$750 prize with drawing held in December. The price for tickets will be \$10 each or 3 for \$20. Tickets for both raffles will be mailed soon and also available at both Museums. Will you be the lucky winner???

Medina County Historical Society will be having 2 new events this year!

Are you interested in making a Gingerbread house? Well, we will be having a Gingerbread House Contest with your structures being on display at the John Smart House Museum! Final details will be published in July, and they will be on display in November & December at the John Smart House Museum. There will be 2 categories of Youth & Adults. Get your creative thinking going and come up with a great gingerbread house to display! Watch for details & registration form in July.

Who likes an Ice Cream Social? We will be having one on August 20th at the McDowell-Phillips House Museum on the lawn. Games, music, popcorn, ice cream & pies! The Medina County Antique Power Assoc. will have their tractors & implements on display too! Watch for more details to come!

Check our website at www.medinacountyhistoricalsociety.com for details.

Questions? Call 330-722-1341 or email mchs@zoominternet.net.

We hope to see you at these events!

SNAPSHOT OF A CIVIL WAR VETERAN

Joseph Henry Brigham was born in Lodi, OH in 1838 to Winifred and Mary White Brigham who came to Medina County from New York state. In the 1840 United States census, the family was in Harrisville Township and by 1850, they lived in Chatham Township. A few years later, they moved to western Ohio where Joseph, as a young man, was a schoolteacher. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Joseph enlisted as a private in the 12th Ohio Volunteer Infantry (OVI). By the end of the war, he had risen through the ranks and mustered out as a colonel of the 69th OVI.

His life following the war was one of public service. He served several terms as Fulton County sheriff, then as state senator from the same county. While a member of the Ohio legislature, he was instrumental in promoting the formation of the Ohio Agricultural Experimental Station and was president of the Ohio Woolgrowers Association. Always active in agricultural organizations, he was called to Washington D.C as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in the McKinley administration. While on his way to the 1904 St. Louis Exhibition to oversee the United States exhibits, he stopped in Fulton County to visit with family and friends and died unexpectedly. He is buried in Greenlawn Cemetery, Delta OH.

The Medina County Historical Society Civil War Project is an ongoing effort to honor every person from the county who served during the war.

—submitted by Joann King

Thanks to Bowling Green State University Library Archives and Find A Grave



MEDINA COUNTY TITLE RECORDS

A local real estate attorney, Stan Scheetz, has donated files of property title insurance documents to the MCHS. The Collections Committee is reviewing and cataloging these records. These title records will help us in researching historic properties. Deed and lease histories are summarized and they sometimes include the wills and other estate documents that illustrate the ownership history. Many of the title histories go back to the original distribution of Western Reserve properties. While this documentation is available in the County Recorder's office and Common Pleas Court records, having the info accessible in the catalog files we are creating can help us in our research. The records encompass the entire county, but not all properties are covered. If you are interested in helping to review these records, please let us know.

—submitted by Scott Benson

M E D I N A C O U N T Y A T W A R

On April 8th, President Brian Feron, welcomed 80 guests to the Medina Library for a presentation by Retired Colonel David Taylor titled "Medina County at War." Taylor's program featured a power point presentation showing photographs of soldiers from conflicts beginning with the Civil War through the current Global War on Terrorism. Taylor focused on the service and sacrifice of Medina County citizens during times of war.

In early 1860, Medina County's citizens were willing to fight a war to save the Union from being divided. In April of 1861 the Civil War began and was mistakenly predicted to be a short war. As the war continued, drafts for men were called and young men had to leave their Medina County farms to serve in the army. Women supplied clothes and medical dressings, all of it collected at the County courthouse to be sent to army hospitals.

Taylor said, "The cost of the war in human lives and torn bodies was very high. Twelve percent of the families in Medina County suffered the loss of a loved one; for every one soldier who died in battle, three died of disease."

World War I drew the service of hundreds of men from Medina County. Of the 42 county citizens who died in the war, 19 were killed in action; the rest died of illness -15 from the Spanish flu. Courtney Lawrence was the first county citizen to die in the war. He was wounded by a German shell fragment and died April 24, 1918. American Legion Post 202 in Medina is named after him in honor of his sacrifice.

World War II was the next conflict to take Medina County lives. Horace Messam Jr., from Wadsworth was killed in Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Bobby Ring of Litchfield was captured by the enemy on one of the Philippine Islands and was made to walk 60 miles in "The Bataan Death March." He died in a Japanese prison camp in 1944, suffering from malaria, cholera, dysentery and abuse from the guards.

By war's end almost 3,000 county citizens had served in the war and 150 were killed or declared missing in action. Lieutenant Stan Vanselow from Granger township, a B-24 bomber pilot, was Medina County's first killed when his plane crashed in Tunisia, in August 1942.

Medina County farmers and citizens lived on rations during the war as food crops, gasoline, tires and scrap metal were given to the government for the war effort. Citizens purchased "War Bonds" to help the government pay for the cost of building tanks, planes and ships. The War Bond building has been moved to the McDowell-Phillips property and will soon display artifacts from WWII.

MEDINA COUNTY AT WAR

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Medina soldiers Jim Anderson and Ralph Waite fought in the “Battle of the Bulge.” Seville’s Sid Meager and Medina’s Captain Junior Woodruff each received two Silver Star medals for Bravery. Sergeant C.B. McClure witnessed first-hand the atrocities of the German Concentration camps. He participated in the war crime trials and after the war was elected Mayor of Medina.

The Korean War claimed the lives of four Medina County citizens: Army soldiers Jack Lilley, Nathan McDonald and Billy Varney, and Marine Clarence Huff. Robert Lewis served his country in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. George Rodgers, an Army combat veteran, served on Medina’s City Council and as Mayor.

America’s combat forces began arriving in Vietnam in 1965. Medina County lost 33 of its citizens in that war. Colonel Taylor himself served in Vietnam and was severely injured. He credits the war with his introduction to his wife Sue, an Army nurse who cared for him back in the States.

Three Medina County residents have died in deployments to Afghanistan or Iraq. All three – Mike Finke, Jacob Frazier, and Devin Grella attended Claggett Middle School where a special wall in the lobby honors their sacrifice.

Taylor ended his presentation with a sobering prediction that “If history is any indication, more sacrifice will be given in the future.”

—submitted by Mary Jane Brewer

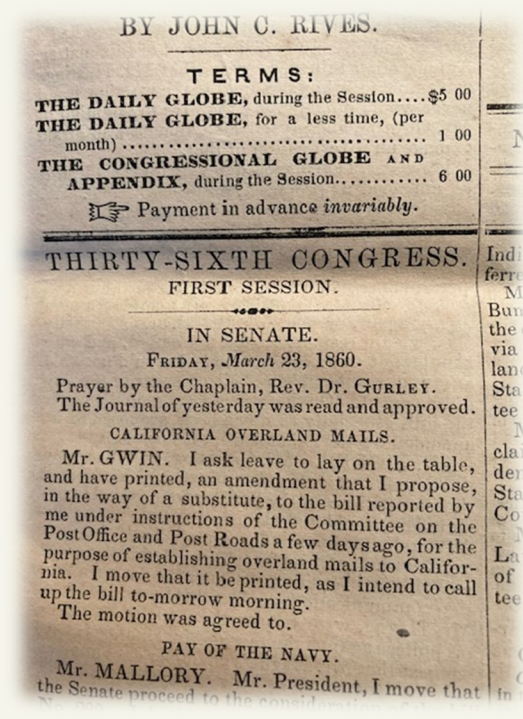


Colonel David Taylor

COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE PROJECT

The Collection Committee continues to work on projects. Scott Benson organized a "group read" of the multiple newspapers in the H.G. Blake Collection. A big thank you to all those who helped. We now have selected those newspapers we are going to keep because of the content. Brian took a batch of Ashland County newspapers to the Ashland County Historical Society. They were happy to receive them. We hope to do the same with the Wayne and Lorain County papers (these are the counties Blake represented in Congress 1859-1863). We are keeping all Medina County papers. SO what do we do with the piles of New York Tribunes, Daily Globes (daily detailed accounts of Congressional activity), etc.? These papers date from the 1850's through the Civil War and are FULL of interesting accounts. Scott Benson is setting up an MCHS account with eBay to sell these papers. I urge anyone who is interested in this time period or American history in general to take a look at them. History teachers out there? These would be great first-hand reports for your students! You can probably see some of the material at the May 6th yard sale at the McDowell-Phillips House or you can call the museum (330-722-1431) to set up an appointment if you would like to purchase a batch.

—submitted by Joann King



ACQUISITIONS

And new acquisitions continue to arrive! Recently, John Wohl brought in an extensive collection of postcards, photographs, etc. from his grandfather Erwin Schmidt. The extensive Schmidt family communicated via postcards in the early 1900's. There are 100's of them, and they include some views of Medina County we have never seen! He was also an avid photographer, and many of the photos are either originals or photocopies of his work. All of the photos will be scanned and imbedded in the Past Perfect catalog system we use for documentation of the MCHS collections. It's all quite a process, but a very interesting and satisfying one. We also received some yearbooks, scrapbooks, etc. from members Gerry and Marsha Whitnable. They originated from a good neighbor of theirs on Wadsworth Road. We are still collecting information on the original donor and her story. Almost every day is Christmas for the MCHS, and its collection of fascinating things from the county's past continues to grow!

—submitted by Joann King



Old Covered Bridge,
Liverpool, Ohio

Cleveland Southwestern car
made by Erwin Schmidt



NEW MEMBERS

Welcome

Leatha Bourne
James Wagner
Labyrinth Management Group, Inc.,
Leslie Traves
Marcia & Alec Moyer
Corrine Lecian
Peggy Abraham
Marilyn Chaken
James & Christine Johnston
Gordon & Lynn Bury,
The Zimmerman Bury Octagon House



Eric Joseph Nickell
Maxina Freitas
Janet Evans
Patricia Keehn
Julie Duncan
Patricia Hall
Phyllis Parker & Richard Kaszian
Ann Keller
Ken & Ruth Etta Tender
Sydney Vanleeuwen
Dave Taylor



Virginia Jeandrevin
Don Canfield

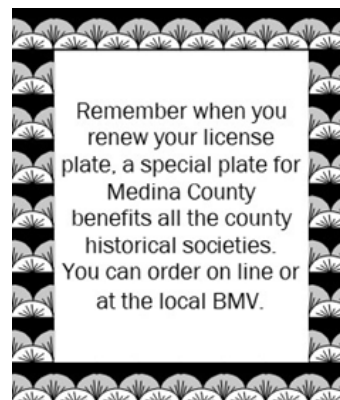
DOCENT TRAINING

We will be having a Docent Training at the McDowell-Phillips House Museum on Thursday, May 18th starting at 7pm. If you have ever thought about becoming a Docent, this is your chance to find out if it is for you! This training is for anyone who has an interest in it or anyone in the past who has been a Docent. A few things have changed since 2022 so it is always good to have a refresher! Training will take about an hour.

Please let us know if you are planning to attend. No prior experience is necessary. It is a fun way to enjoy the museum and our guests! Try it you may like it! Email us at mchs@zoominternet.net or leave a message at 330-722-1341.



FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.MEDINACOUNTYHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM

Membership Categories:
Membership Year is Jan 1st – Dec 31st

Student/Senior	\$10.00	Organization	\$30.00
Individual	\$20.00	Patron	\$50.00
Senior Family	\$20.00	Corporate	\$100.00
Family	\$25.00	Life	\$300.00 (one time payment)

Medina County Historical Society
1922-2023

206 North Elmwood St.
Medina, Ohio 44256

MEDINA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY