

Medina County



John Smart House

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



McDowell-Phillips House

Dear Members:

We wrapped up 2023 with several great events. The Gingerbread house displays featured at the John Smart House brought many visitors to tour and vote on their favorite. The winners by category were: Candy Jackson (Adult) and Elliot Borstein (Child). This was the first time many had seen the museum, and we secured several new memberships. Look forward to this event to be held again later this year.

A tally of our 2023 measurements: Facebook Followers = 3,809, Instagram = 107, Emails processed 4,192, Web site visits 7,507, Volunteer Hours -5,631, John Smart House visitors - 676, McDowell-Phillips House visitors -790.

Victorian Feast winners Dr. H.Linn & Nancy Mast, Connie Frey

The Grand Raffle winner was Joann Johnson. Thanks to all who purchased tickets.

The Holiday tea at the McDowell-Phillips House sold out quickly and our volunteers did a great job, planning, baking, and serving the guests. The holiday decorations took almost three weeks to complete, and the house just shined! We had a very good turnout of guests at our open house events even with uncooperative weather.

(continued on page 2)

| 2024 Officers | Board Members | Emeritus Members |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Brian Feron-President | Maxine Freitas, Pieri Levandofsky | Joann King |
| Charles Ramer -Vice President | Judy Davanzo, Chet Simmons | Richard Clark |
| Mike Davanzo-Secretary | Andrea Spickler, Beth Biggins-Ramer | Tom Hilberg |
| Dave Arbogast-Treasurer | Mike Tucheck, Carole Feron, Bill Parker | |

Follow us at: www.MedinaCountyHistoricalSociety.com or on [Facebook](#)

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

(continued from page 1)

Our annual meeting held in November honored the Northrop Award winners Letha Mapes and Mary Jane Brewer. We also recognized Mary Jo Palmer and Lila Lehrer for their years of service as trustees.

Our two museums are closed for the winter except for private tours, yet there is a great deal of work going on. This is the time of year we focus on resetting the museum displays and making normal repairs. In the basement of the McDowell-Phillips House the collection of items for the spring yard sale is starting to build. Come shop on May 4th. And see for yourself.

We recently received a grant from the Willard Stephenson Foundation and the Feckley Foundation that will help restore the north attic “billiard” room at the McDowell-Phillips house. This room needs plaster, carpentry and electrical upgrades and may be included on a nooks and cranny tour in the future,

We are also working with the city in preparing for “Totality” the total eclipse of the sun on Monday April 8th. Watch your email for details.

Brian Feron, President



The Board of Trustees held a planning session on Sat Jan 13 to map out the year and beyond.



Northrop Award Winners: Letha Mapes, Mary Jane Brewer, and Volunteer of the Year Sarah Jane Ingraham

U P C O M I N G E V E N T S & P R O G R A M S

Trivia is back so mark your calendars for Saturday, March 2nd .

It will be held at the Medina Eagles Club, 696 Lafayette Rd., Medina 44256. Doors will open at 5pm with dinner at 6pm and Trivia starting at 7pm. Dinner includes chicken, pork, mac n cheese, green beans, corn, salad & dessert. Cash bar - 50/50 raffle - Gift Basket Raffles - Wine fridge Raffle!! FUN, FUN, FUN!!

This is a Team effort, so get your teams ready for some fun and excitement! Price is \$40 per person; teams consist of 1 - 8 people. Seating is limited - preregistration required!

Send your team member names, your phone number, email & checks made payable to MCHS to 206 N. Elmwood, Medina, OH 44256 ATTN: TRIVIA

If you have any question, please call 330-722-1341 or email us at mchs@zoominternet.net.

We have some great programs lined up for our winter series held at the Medina Library. Rooms A&B. The room normally fills up, so come a little early get your seat.

Sat Feb 10, A presentation titled Beautiful By Design, a Miles Reed production about the revival of Medina square by the community Design Committee.

Sat March 9, and **Sat Apr 13** all starting at 1:00pm at the Medina Library. Program topics will be announced soon via email, Facebook, and media.

Sat Feb 24th at 10:00 a.m., we will have docent training and refresher at the John Smart House. This is a good time to learn more about our museum and the wonderful collection we have.

M U S E U M T O U R S

We are closed for the winter.

Please watch our website for any updates, www.medinacountyhistoricalsociety.com.

If you have any questions, please call 330-722-1341 or email mchs@zoominternet.net.

**SNAPSHOT OF A CIVIL WAR VETERAN
THE SECOND OHIO VOLUNTEER CAVALRY**

The Second Ohio Volunteer Cavalry was a prominent regiment in Medina County history. From the McDowell brothers, Robert and Okey, to the Wilson brothers, Thomas and Lewis of York Township, over 100 men from Medina County served in the unit including Hiram Graham from Hinckley, William Bartholomew of Guilford and Mandred Weeks of Wadsworth.

However, men are not the only component of a Cavalry unit; there must be horses as well. And, where did the horses come from? Did each man bring a horse with him to camp or did the government provide them?

The answer lies in a article in the Cleveland Morning Leader newspaper from February 16, 1863:

The business of purchasing horses for the Second Cavalry closes at Columbus today. The horses purchased are said to be much superior to those first bought. Each company is furnished with horses of a particular color. Company A's horses are sorrel; Co. B's, light bay; Co. C's, dark bay; Co. D's, grey; Co. E's, dark brown; Co. F's, black; Co. G's light brown; Co. H's. chestnut sorrel. The non-commissioned staff have cream-colored horses.

Robert McDowell was in Company F; Okey McDowell Co, A; the Wilson brothers Co. A; Hiram Graham Co. H; Willam Bartholomew Co. B; and Mandred Weeks non-commissioned staff.

Submitted by: Judith Parish

**FROM OUR ARCHIVES
GRAFF AND GANYARD GENERAL STORE
IN GRANGER**

Another recent addition to our postcard collection is a view of the Graff and Ganyard General Store in Granger circa early 1900'a.

Carl Alvis Graff was born in Granger May 21, 1883, to Charles Ernest (1854-1946) and Millie Henninger Graff (1854-1905). He was the oldest of their four boys; the others being Lewis George (1886-1974), Julius Carl (1890-1984) and George John (1890-1988). His early education was in the local schools. In the 1900 Federal Census he was listed with his parents and brothers as a student and was 17 years old. Carl married Alice Emma Coddin, another well-known and early family in Medina on May 1, 1907, and by 1910 he has begun his career as a grocer.

On September 12, 1918, he registered for World War I at the Local board for Medina County in Wadsworth.

(Continued on page 7)

MISS JANE LUCILLE AGAR

It is always exciting to go through a collection and find a jewel of an artifact. In this case the jewel is one of Medina's own success stories. One of the items from Ross Trump's collection from Loveland Farm is a rather tattered scrapbook filled with news clippings, photographs, postcards, etc. It originally belonged to Jane Lucille Agar who became a nationally recognized actress and singer in the early 1920's.

In one article she is billed as the "Prima Donna of Akron", but she actually was the "prima donna" of Sharon Center. Her father Bill and family lived in and operated a hotel on the Sharon Center circle. They had two daughters: Jane Lucille noted for her beautiful singing voice and Floy who gained local fame with her "whistling act."

Jane got her start by singing in the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church. A "nationally known musical comedian" happened to walk by the church, heard her voice, and offered her a career on the stage. At first, father said no, but Jane eventually won out and went to New York City to appear in Maude Adams' show "A Kiss for Cinderella." Jane Lucille was on her way. In her second performance she played Mona Lisa and did so well she was named the "Mona Lisa of the stage." She moved on to musical comedy in "Hitchy Koo."



Her scrapbook is full of newspaper reviews, performance programs, postcards of the cities and fancy hotels where she sang. It was a whirlwind success, but there was a price. Jane's schedule was so full that she had no time to rest. She lost weight. An Akron Beacon Journal writer declared "There was just one remedy for that. It was Sharon Center and the home and folks she knew."

Lieut. J. George Layton, chief pilot of the National Airway Services Co. was in the area. Jane Lucille Agar decided she wanted to experience a thrilling ride in an open airplane. One day in June Lieut. Layton picked up Sharon Center's "prima donna" and flew her all the way to Medina. They most likely landed in the small air field behind the Burnham house (now Corkscrew Saloon). That is where A.I. Root and his sons operated their new WACO plane.

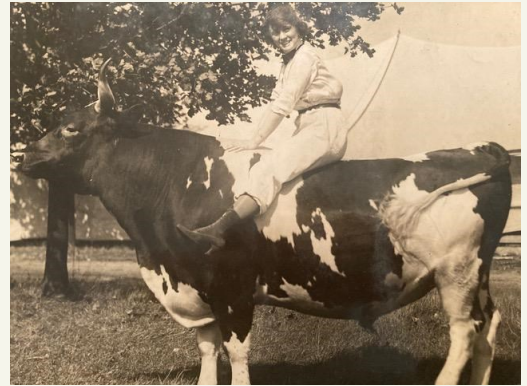
Anyway, it must have been a very successful flight because fifteen days later George and Jane Lucille took another "routine" flight. They secretly met up with Jane's relatives who happened to have a marriage license and minister on hand, and they were married on the spot

(continued on page 6)

MISS JANE LUCILLE AGAR

(continued from page 5)

Apparently, Jane continued to perform and traveled all over the country and to Europe to sing in the finest hotels and private clubs. In November 1922, she sang at a major military affair with Rear Admiral James H. Glennon as guest of honor. One of her selections was "Look for the Silver Lining." It appears from later reviews and her long marriage to Lieut. Layton, she found her silver lining - from simple beginnings in Sharon Center to national fame.



It is uncertain how Ross Trump ended up with the scrapbook, but I do remember him talking about the Sharon Center girl with the beautiful voice. He knew her.

Submitted by: Joann King

FROM OUR ARCHIVES
ESHELMAN BROTHERS STORE REVISITED

In one of our past newsletters, you will recall that we had a story of the Eshelman Brother's grocery store in Seville; it told of several fires that they had to recover from. Here is a view with another problem. In 1913, Ohio and the nation suffered a severe flood that caused much damage and loss of life. Below is a photo of the Eshelman Store during that flood in Seville.



Submitted by Tom Hilberg

FROM OUR ARCHIVES
GRAFF AND GANYARD GENERAL STORE
IN GRANGER

(continued from page 4)

The partnership between Graff and Ganyard looks like it lasted about 10 years. By 1920 Fred Ganyard was in Akron.

In 1920 Carl Graff is working the store by himself. He and Emma have been joined by son Delmar, their only offspring, born October 12, 1912, in Granger.

In 1930 the family is living in a house on West Grangerburg road, and he continues as a grocer. In answer to one of the census taker's questions he completed 4 years of high school. On the 1930 census Carl is now a "Salesman Proprietor."

By 1940 Carl and Emma are alone in the house; he is listed as a grocer of his own store. Son Delmar is no longer in the household, having married Lydia K. Baumgartner of Morgantown, West Virginia, and daughter of Ellet S. and Cecelia Bates Baumgartner.

Interesting to note that the couple took out two marriage licenses one in Cuyahoga County and one in Medina County. They were married in Medina on July 15, 1936, by the Rev. Louis John Quade of Lodi.

Delmar was educated in the Granger School System graduating from Granger High School in 1929. He attended Baldwin Wallace College in Berea and graduated in 1934.

Returning to Medina County he taught instrumental music for grades one through 12 in numerous county schools for 19 years, then became a county school supervisor for another 19 years, directing programs such as the county film library, which was enlarged under his direction. He started the Band-A-Rama and was director of art and music education in county schools. When he retired from his position with the County School System, he became a bailiff for Judge Phillip Baird. Delmar Coddling Graff died February 13, 1988, at Medina Community Hospital. He and Lydia are buried in Spring Grove Cemetery. Their children were daughter Jean Smead of Brunswick; sons Fred and John both of Medina.



Emma died in March 1946 and was buried in Spring Grove. Sometime before 1950 Carl remarried to a lady named Lilly. In 1950 Carl is 66, widowed and working as a clerk in a grocery store of which he is the owner.

Carl A. Graff died August 5, 1976, at Medina Community Hospital, after a long illness. He was 93 years old and had been living on West Friendship Street and was a grocer for 36 years. A member of the Medina United Methodist Church where services were held, led by Rev. William C. Yehnert. He is buried in Spring Grove next to first wife Emma.

Our next newsletter edition will continue with the Ganyard side—stay tuned! Submitted by Tom Hilberg

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome

Logan Johnson

CT Exteriors

Medina Gem

Sarah Tome

Judy Lucas

Margaret Eiland



Betty Riegger

Ron Voorhees

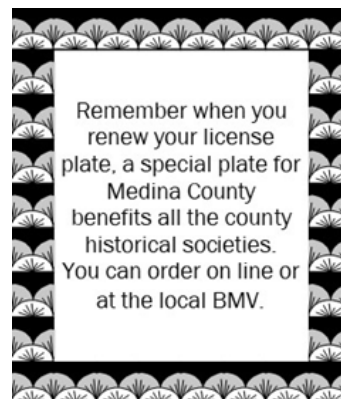
Tom Cavalier

Ruth Etta Tender

Theresa Kuehn

Mamie Grunau

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY



D O C E N T T R A I N I N G

Docent Training will be held at the John Smart House Museum, 206 N. Elmwood, Medina, on Saturday February 24th, 10am. It will be approximately 1 hour long.

If you are unable to make this training, please notify us at
mchs@zoominternet.net or call 330-722-1341.

Our volunteers make us a successful organization. Thank you!

M E M B E R S H I P R E N E W A L R E M I N D E R

Your membership dues are a very important part of our operating budget. If you have not paid your 2024 membership dues, please remit asap to remain active on our records.

We appreciate your continued support for our organization. Life members are not obligated to renew however donations are always appreciated!

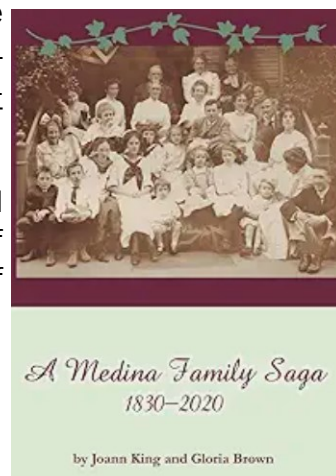
N E W B O O K

On a visit to the recently acquired McDowell-Phillips House in 2019, Gloria Brown and Joann King discovered a small trunk full of letters which had not been read for over 100 years. The trunk opened a whole new world for the two long time Medina history lovers. According to Joann King, "We had previously had photographs, artifacts, and architecture; now we discovered the people."

Gloria proposed that they write a book about the McDowell family. Joanne agreed. They spent more than a year researching the family and reading letters found in the attic. The women volunteered their time and talent, The Stephenson Foundation provided the publication costs, and now the book is available on Amazon and at both Medina County Historical Society museums.

For \$20.00, the bulk of which goes directly to the Medina County Historical Society, you too can become acquainted with HG Blake and generations of the McDowell family. This very readable and informative book offers lots of pictures and humorous anecdotes, as well as local and national history.

The new book will be available for purchase at our museums as well as on Amazon. The link to purchase book: [here](#)



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 (per person) |

Medina County Historical Society
1922-2024

206 North Elmwood St.
Medina, Ohio 44256

MEDINA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY