



# *The Amherst Historical Society*

## *Grindstone Newsletter*

March—April 2021

## Meet Your Board of Directors



Aaron Baaske



Diane Camera



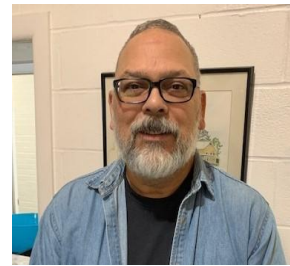
Deanna Houston



Khristal Kramer-Nutt



Lori Melendez



Tony Melendez



April Sawyer



Ryan Sawyer



Cathy Sekletar



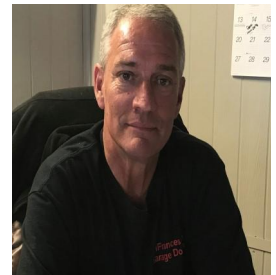
John Sekletar



Jerry Torma



Gina Welch



Mitch Witherell

# Learn More About Your Board of Directors



Aaron Baaske is in his second year on the Board. He was elected as President for 2021. Aaron and his family have lived in Amherst for 29 years. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from MVNU. He has served on the Board of the Church of the Nazarene and the stewardship Board for the Church of the Open Door. He has experience working on various community projects. He currently is employed with Chris Arnott Agency providing information and insurance products to the community. Aaron enjoys working with people, loves to read, to stay informed on world politics and learn new things.



Diane Camera is in her second year on the Board. She serves on the Fundraising Committee. Diane and her family have lived in Amherst for 46 years. She attended LCCC. She has established relationships throughout our community working with different companies to improve their marketing and organizational skills. Diane has coordinated events with The Cleveland Clinic, Fairview Hospital, Business and Professional Women, YWCA, Easter Seals and LC Employment Network. She has worked with Ted Jacobs, Stein Mart, The Richard & David Jacobs Group and Amherst Hospital. Now retired, Diane is an active member and volunteer in many organizations. She joined AHS Board because she believes history has much to teach us and is worth preserving for generations.



Deanna Houston is in her first year on the Board. She serves on the Fundraising Committee. Deanna has lived in the area for 26 years. She retired from Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority in 2010. Deanna has 10 years of volunteer work for National Park System. She has always had an interest in the history of people and historic buildings. For enjoyment Deanna loves spending time with her grandchildren, traveling, hiking, reading, movies. In her spare time she also enjoys searching for antiques and collectibles. Her interests don't stop there, she also taught line dancing and the Texas two-step.



Khristal Kramer-Nutt is in her second year on the Board. She is Secretary for 2021. She and her husband Dan were married in The Sandstone Village at St. George Chapel in 2011. She relates that she, "Immediately fell absolutely in love with the Village". Khristal graduated from homeschool in 1998 and received degrees in Art, Business Administration and Marketing from LCCC. She has been a part of the Amherst business scene for nearly a decade. Khristal is the business owner of D'Tutanelli's Pizza with locations in Amherst and Avon as well as owner of Kramer REI, a residential real estate investment company. She enjoys gardening, home design and spending time with her husband Dan and their two children Maximus (8) and Brinley (4).

## **A Letter from the Executive Director ...Sandy Kaiser**

Dear Members,

It's that time of year again to start spring cleaning! As you sort through your items please remember that we always need donations for our garage sales (please; no appliances, electronics or clothing). Speaking of garage sales, our first one for 2021 will be held on Friday and Saturday, March 26 and 27, from 8:00am to 3:00pm. Check our list of Upcoming Events for other scheduled sale dates. Since this is our major source of fundraising we are holding them more often this year.

Our Sandstone Event Hall has a whole new look thanks to Maxine Miller's donation toward new carpet. As well, Bob and Martha Pallante, contributed money to purchase more comfortable chairs and, since Bob is a retired Nordson employee, we also get the Nordson match for their donation. Besides Nordson, did you know that employees of Sherwin Williams and Key Bank can also request matching donations? We are one of the charities Amazon will donate to, so if you order from Amazon please select Amherst Historical Society as your favorite charity. There are more opportunities out there if we just take the time to ask. So what happened to the old chairs you ask? AHS was able to donate them to the Boys and Girls Club and The ABI Synagogue in Lorain. It feels good to be able to support other worthy organizations

Did you know that The Amherst Historical Society has an Endowment Fund administered by The Community Foundation of Lorain County? The interest from this fund helps AHS to fund community projects and other operating expenses. If you would like to make a donation, any amount is appreciated. Donations may be submitted by going to The Community Foundation site: <https://www.peoplewhocare.org/funds> search for Amherst Historical Society donate page or make a check payable and mail to: Community Foundation of Lorain County, 9080 Leavitt Rd., Elyria, OH 44035. In the memo space please add Amherst Historical Society. If your donation is in memory of someone please include the person's name with your payment. We thank you for supporting AHS.

Since our Sandstone Event Hall is large enough to accommodate social distancing we are starting to get some rentals scheduled. Please help us spread the word that we are open for business. Call the Amherst Historical Society Office at 440-988-7255 for details.

I'm sorry to report that we lost one of our volunteers. Trudi Koch volunteered at the Long Barn Garage Sales and was also a special friend of Ralph Zilch. Our prayers go out to Ralph and Trudi's family.

Take care and be safe, remember every day we are one day closer to spring!!

We truly appreciate your continued support,

Sandy

### **Amherst Historical Society 2021 Membership Renewal**

Thank you to all who have renewed already, if you have not renewed your 2021 membership dues, please take a moment to do so now. There is a renewal form included in this Grindstone and email members will get an attachment. Can't remember if you renewed or not? Just call the office and we'll check our files. Already sent in your dues? Pass the membership form to a friend. Don't miss out on a chance to be a winner. Membership must be current to be eligible for the monthly drawings.

Congratulations to our monthly winners!

March—Beverly Iwanek

April—Ron and Sue Sauer



## The Quigley Museum

### Where All of Old Time Amherst Comes Alive!

Imagine spending an afternoon at the Quigley Museum reliving those early days of the late 1800s and mid-1900s. So much to see as you make your way through rooms filled with memorabilia, photographs, life-like mannequins, military artifacts and uniforms, as well as, re-creations of early Amherst businesses, dental/physicians' offices, and area sandstone quarries.

**Amherst Business Room**



The early part of the 1900s found new stores called "Beauty Shops" open in the little village of Amherst. A re-creation of an early shop is displayed in the Business Room of the museum complete with the newest way to style hair, the permanent wave machine.

Included among a selection of styling paraphernalia is an early curling iron which had to be heated over a gas burner on the stove. The first curling iron was patented in 1866 by Sir Hiram Stevens Maxim who, interestingly, was also the man who designed the machine gun and mouse trap.

**Amherst Quarry Room**



There is no greater collection of early Amherst quarry artifacts, tools and photographs than featured in the Quarry Room of the Museum. Among the displays is a re-creation of a 1920s sandstone quarry office. The clerk is using a check writer which types one letter at a time with a turn of the disc; similar to the toy typewriters that later followed. Of interest is the candlestick phone on her desk which has no dial since all calls were put through by an operator.

There are two life-size-cut-outs of early quarry workers. The one pictured is of John Chihay, a Polish immigrant, who came to work at the quarries in 1920. His medical record reflecting early silicosis and his time card showing an hourly wage of .06 cents an hour is on display as well. Featured on the wall next to him is a 1889 time clock; he most likely may have used.



The Quigley Museum is open each Sunday May to September from 2:00pm to 4:00pm; except holidays.

Due to COVID-19 we are only scheduling small personalized tours at this time.

Questions regarding personal tours may be directed to Museum Curator, Joan Rosenbusch, at 988-7255.

## The Curious Curator . . . By Joan Rosenbusch

This cold weather makes sissies out of a lot of us so we stay indoors or go to Florida. But back in the day the tougher breed of Amherstonians looked forward to the cold when the ice would freeze up enough to go skating.

Yes, Amherst had an outdoor skating pond as far back as 1916 in the area of the Brandt allotment off of North Main Street.

By 1932 another rink was constructed by the city at the foot of Lincoln Street. It was big news when a flood light was erected for night skating in 1937. Later that year two eight-foot benches were added so people could sit while changing their skates.

The Brandt pool continued to be the place to go and in 1940 Mayor Michaels greeted the skaters with a shelter they could use to warm their frozen toes and hands before going back out to continue the "fun". It was an old WPA tool house that was not being used so the mayor saw a chance to put it to good service. Scoutmaster Sam Wragg worked out an arrangement whereby a boy scout would be in charge of opening the shanty, starting the fire and locking up at night.

Skating parties have been popular during the past few days at Brandt's park. The ice has had the snow removed from it and the mirror like surface pleased devotees of the sport. An unusual circumstance in connection with the resumption of skating is that the price has been reduced to 10 cents for adults, one of the few reductions offered the public for any commodity.

### FAMILIAR AT SKATING POND



Scenes like this one are familiar at the town's skating pond when the ice is good for skating. The skaters don't have any shelter in which to change shoes so they sit on whatever is handy, in this case it is the running board of a car.

Things seemed to be going well with the Amherst Water Works donating the water needed to freeze the ponds and the coal being donated to keep the newly donated stove burning. That is until in 1943 when flames from a fire destroyed the shanty. The cause of the fire was unknown.

Three years later Mr. August Nabakowski donated 10 acres of land on Milan Avenue where a park and skating rink was to be built. The new pond was flooded but the fill washed out with the weight of the water only to have it happen again a week later. Once again the Boy Scouts were put to work to clean out and burn refuse and weeds in preparation for the skating season. The weeds and weather overtook the workers and the winter passed with no skating rink.

## ICE SKATING NOT SO GOOD...



Dorothy and Betty Slack of 582 Jackson street stoped long enough for the News-Time camera to catch their tale of woe—winter skating weather here and no ice to skate on here in town. The ice pond was flooded but floating debris as shown in the photograph made skating over most of the pond impractical.



By 1948, the Village Department and the Board of Education worked together to get the skating pond ready. In July of 1949 the new Mayor Kane reported that, at council's request, he would see to getting a bull dozer into the skating pond on Milan Avenue to scrape out the weeds and rebuild the banks, following which weed killer would be used so the pond would be ready for use in the winter.

The Milan Avenue pond was usable now and the townspeople were happy once again but at some point, in the mid-fifties a new pond was being used at Powers Elementary School as an unattended skating rink.

Superintendent Fred Powers said he would arrange for supervision of the pond since debris was being thrown into the water which, when frozen, would create a hazard for the skaters. William Kroehe and Jim Wagner were given the job and Wagner also officiated as a skating instructor. Later Art Thomas, in charge of recreational activities, became supervisor with help from the Village and the Fire Department.



I don't know when the skating ponds became a thing of the past in Amherst but we have had some cold winters that would allow that sport to once again arise.

However, like I said before, we (including myself) have become sissies in the cold weather.

Wouldn't it be fun to watch an outdoor hockey team like this one once more?



## **Do You Remember? . . . By Vivienne Bickley**

### **Who Was St. Patrick?**

Who was St. Patrick? When the holidays are over, meaning Christmas and New Year's, we feel let down and look forward to the lesser ones, like Valentine's Day with candy and flowers. Then in March on the 17<sup>th</sup> we celebrate St. Patrick's Day. My first thoughts are about corned beef and cabbage for dinner and to get out the green (Kelly green of course) tablecloth to see if it needs ironing. But who are we celebrating? Unlike the Easter Bunny, St. Patrick was a real person. Since snakes are not native to Ireland, the story that he drove them out of Ireland is not considered the truth. But it could be that is why there are none. This much is true, he was born in Great Britain, his name was Maewyn Succat at around 400 A.D. when he was 16, he was kidnapped from his home on the coast and taken to Ireland to become a slave whose job was to be a Sheppard. After six years he escaped to his home in Ireland. There he had a dream that he should preach the Gospel. Although there were some Christians in Ireland, it was he who spread Christianity through Ireland and brought an organized church into existence.

We wear shamrocks because, as the legend says; St. Patrick taught that it represented the Holy Trinity, the three leaves represented the Father, the Son and The Holy Spirit. Can you believe that blue was the original color chosen to represent St. Patrick's Day? Green was eventually favored.

Don't forget to plant your peas and also some cabbage seeds on St. Patrick's Day. An old farmers belief was that in order to get a special crop, you should plant your seeds in your night clothes! Hope you were allowed to wear a bathrobe or coat; it can get mighty chilly in March!

Daylight Savings Time is coming up. After all the confusion about the changing of clock times, I finally learned you spring forward in the spring and fall backward in the fall.

St. Patrick's Day gives me the excuse to sing all the old Irish songs I know like: "When Irish Eyes are Smiling"; "Irishman's Shanty"; "McNamara's Band"; and best of all: "Who Threw the Overalls in Mrs. Murphy's Chowder?"



## April Fool's Day or All Fool's Day

April Fool's Day seems to have begun in France in 1564 when France switched from the Julian Calendar to the Gregorian Calendar. In the Julian Calendar the new year began with the spring equinox around April 1. People who were slow to get the news or failed to recognize that the start of the new year had moved to January 1 and continued to celebrate it during the last week of March through April 1 became the butt of jokes, pranks and hoaxes and were called "April Fools".

In our day and age, April 1 is like Christmas for Jokesters. Some go for the more spontaneous prank such as setting all the clocks in the house an hour early or covering the toilet bowl with plastic wrap or the ever traditional switching out sugar and salt.

But, over the years there are those who have gone to great lengths to create more elaborate April Fool schemes. On April 1, 1915, during the middle of World War 1, a French plane flew over a German camp and dropped what appeared to be a large bomb. Soldiers on the ground scattered, but when no explosion followed, they discovered the "bomb" was a football with a note saying, "April Fool".

On April 1, 1975 an Australian news program announced that it would be converting to metric time. They explained that this would mean there would be 100 seconds to the minute, and 100 minutes to the hour, and 20-hour days. As well, seconds would become milldays, minutes become centidays and hours become decaidays. An interview with the Deputy Premier at the time made the story all the more convincing.

Closer to home, in 1996, Taco Bell, duped people when they announced it had agreed to purchase Philadelphia's Liberty Bell and intended to remake it the Taco Liberty Bell. Then in 1998, after Burger King advertised a "Left-Handed Whopper" scores of clueless customers requested the fake sandwich.

So, just a word of caution: spontaneous or elaborate . . . April 1, 2021 is quickly approaching!



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### Mystery Item for this Issue

Last issue we had no guesses for our mystery item. It was a Coca Cola Safety First Brass Sidewalk Marker for school crossings and other crosswalks where there was pedestrian traffic. Many companies, Coke, Pepsi, 7-Up, etc. donated them to new schools that were being built in the 1930's-1970's. Schools would use them as "head of the line" markers for students to line up for their bus. During WWII many of these markers were removed to use the metal for war production items.



This issue's item may be a little easier to identify. It is made of wood, 4" in diameter and 7" long. It is usually accompanied by another item and would have been found in an old apothecary.

E-mail your guess to:

[amhersthistory@centurytel.net](mailto:amhersthistory@centurytel.net)

Or call the AHS Office 440-988-7255

and let us know your guess.



## **The Sandstone Village. . . Amherst's Secret Treasure**

Over the past several years during events at The Sandstone Village, it was not uncommon to hear comments such as, "I've lived in Amherst most of my life and never knew that this existed" or "I drive past each day on my way to work and wondered what was back here" or "What a surprise, it reminds me of a smaller version of historic Williamsburg".

### Historical Amherst

Actually, The Village is a tribute to historical Amherst beginning with its two vintage sandstone one-room schoolhouses: the Milan Avenue schoolhouse, original to the grounds, erected in 1879, and the Spring Street schoolhouse, constructed in 1882, located on Spring Street in Amherst. Following consolidation of the Amherst schools, the Milan Avenue schoolhouse was purchased by the Hickory Tree Grange and the Spring Street schoolhouse acquired by the St. George Episcopal Church. In 1988 the St. George Episcopal Church was donated to The Amherst Historical Society and through the efforts of The Nord Family Foundation and The Amherst Historical Society, the structure was transported to The Village and later fully restored as the St. George Chapel.

In addition to the Grange Hall and Chapel, The Village includes a fully restored 1840s Greek Revival House appropriately named the Harris-Dute House for the only two Amherst families who ever occupied the dwelling. Originally located on Oberlin Road, it had been scheduled for demolition, but The Amherst Historical Society intervened, and in 1970 the owner donated it to AHS. As well, the Octagonal Barn, the only octagonal barn left in the state of Ohio, originally slated for demolition to make a housing development, was transported from Middle Ridge Road.

The Amherst Auto Garage, original to the property, houses a 1920 Model T Ford and a 1920s Chevy Stake Bed Truck donated by Evan Nord. As well, in 2003, Evan Nord donated a 1925 B&O Caboose, previously located beside the Oberlin Depot, to the Society to commemorate the 1916 Amherst Train Wreck. The Pig Barn, the fourth original cut sandstone building quarried around 1890, was donated to the grounds and transported from Oberlin Road. In 1999 an addition to the grounds included a Blacksmith Shop constructed by volunteers using Amherst Sandstone and pre-civil war maple wood. Most recently a WW11 POW Barracks from Camp Perry was donated to The Village and renamed The Long Barn.

In 2011 The Live Oak Engine Co. Fire Museum became the latest Village development. Through state and local funds and labor provided solely by Amherst firemen, the sandstone and brick museum is host to a collection of late 1800 and early 1900 fire memorabilia, photos and fire equipment among which is the original Live Oak 22-man hand-drawn, piano box squirrel tail manual water pumper.

### How It Originated

The concept of a historical area in Amherst was the very first project of the newly organized Nord Family Foundation. In November of 1988 under the leadership of NFF Trustee, Evan Nord, The Foundation purchased 6.5 acres of land on Milan Avenue, which included the former sandstone one-room schoolhouse owned by The Hickory Tree Grange. In addition, The Foundation acquired a sandstone house on Milan Avenue across from The Grange Hall. That structure, The Quigley House, became The Quigley Museum of the Amherst Historical Society.

The transaction provided the groundwork for a much larger project. It was, as Evan Nord said, "the first step in creating a small, informal historical district."

Through the efforts of The Nord Family Foundation, Nordson Corporation, The Amherst Historical Society and multiple grants and personal and public donations, the area grew from that small historical district to what is today...a village reflecting the life, times and events of early Amherst.

Reference: Investing in Community, The History and Legacy of the Nord Family of Ohio  
The Amherst Historical Archives

**The Amherst Historical Society**

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**The Amherst Historical Society**  
**Board of Directors**

Aaron Baaske - President

Tony Melendez - Vice President

Khristal Kramer-Nutt - Secretary

April Sawyer - Treasurer

Diane Camera    Deanna Houston    Lori Melendez

Ryan Sawyer    John Sekletar    Cathy Sekletar

Gerard Torma    Gina Welch    Mitch Witherell

Executive Director—Sandy Kaiser

The Amherst Historical Society wishes to acknowledge  
a charitable remainder trust by Mr. Evan Nord and administered  
by the Community Foundation of Lorain County.

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Upcoming Events**

**Amherst Historical Society Garage Sale Dates**  
**Long Barn, Pine Tree and Gallery open every sale**  
**Weekend Hours Open 8:00am to 3:00pm**

Friday and Saturday, March 26 and 27

Saturday, April 10 and 24

Saturday, May 8 and 22

**Wednesday Hours Open 10:00am to 3:00pm**

Wednesday, March 31

Wednesday, April 14 and 28

Wednesday, May 12 and 26

**Drive-Thru Fundraiser to benefit The Amherst Historical Society March 20**

Tickets for this event must be purchased by March 14

Refer to the flyer included in this issue of The Grindstone for details

**Dine to Donate at Pogie's Clubhouse**

Refer to the flyer included in this issue of The Grindstone for upcoming dates

**Volunteer Appreciation Drive-Thru Lunch on April 17**

**AHS Dinner & Winetasting Fundraiser on May 1**

Limited Seating -Reservations Required- \$30 per person