



The Amherst Historical Society *Grindstone Newsletter*

September / October 2022

Amherst Historical Society Events

For questions or to make reservations please call the AHS Office 440-988-7255

By My Lantern's Light



October 22 and 23
The Sandstone Village
763 Milan Ave
5pm to 8pm

Take a guided tour of the
Village, hear spooky tales of history,
Enjoy Cider and Donuts in the Grange Hall

Admission \$5 per person RSVP by Oct 14
Children ages 5 and under are free
Children will not be admitted without an adult

Volunteer opportunities available

Please call the AHS office and we will be happy
to answer your questions.

Murder Mystery Dinner

At Sandstone Hall 6pm

Sat Oct 8 and Sun Oct 9

Join us for an evening of fun
as we try to solve

"The Death of Dr Pepper"

\$30/members

\$35/ non members



Thanks to our dedicated and knowledgeable docents, the Quigley Museum is open Sundays 2-4. Reservations are not needed and the tour is free. Learn more history of people and events that shaped Amherst. See curling irons and permanent wave machines. View an ear trumpet and a dental pig and many other memorabilia from the Amherst of old. Copies of the book "Images of America Amherst" are available to purchase for \$10.



Community Events

September 14
Main Street Amherst
Last Walkin' on Wednesday
for 2022



AMHERST
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Craft Supply Swap

Deliver craft supplies to the Library Oct 11-14 during Library hours. Shop for craft supplies October 15 between 2-4.

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

Dear Members and Friends,

This is the second year that Amherst Historical Society is participating in Connect to a Cause, hosted by the Community Foundation of Lorain County. This event raises money for non-profit organizations in Lorain County. Last year was very successful as we received many generous donations. Please consider supporting us again. Donations can be made at the AHS office. When paying by check please made it payable to: Community Foundation of Lorain County so can we qualify for matching funds.

Contribution forms are included with this edition. All money received comes back to AHS. Donation deadline is September 15th. Please call us at the office 440-988-7255 for further details.

Connect to a Cause money collected this year will be used to create a new exhibit for the Sandstone Village called the "Quigley Switch". Plans are to build a railroad flat car loaded with sandstone close to the railroad track switch where the stone from the Quigley Quarry was transferred onto the railroad for distribution. We are excited to share this history with the community in celebration of our 50th Anniversary. Yes, AHS was officially founded in 1973. Look for more celebrations in 2023 as we approach this milestone in our history.

Thank you,
Sandy

Monthly Gift Card Winners

September - Darrell McCarty October –Lesley Nicholas

This and That in the Long Barn

You never know what odds and ends you might find in the Long Barn. This was the case when volunteer, Regina Moore, came across a small booklet nestled among the many books shelved there. The booklet, titled "This and That", contained 17 pages of poetry penned by Etta M. Letteman and was compiled on the occasion of her ninety-first birthday, on May 5, 1984.

As Regina scanned the pages, one poem in particular titled "To Amherst Historical Society" caught her eye. She read the following:

The Amherst Historical Society though not very old, has accomplished a lot; so I have been told.

They meet the fourth Wednesday in the library here, for a program and fellowship most months of the year.

The highlight I think is the July Jamboree; you wouldn't believe it unless you come and see.

There is something for all, the young and the old; and a large profit is made when everything is sold.

We sponsored Bicentennial and it was sure grand; the parade was fantastic and so was the band.

Then at Christmas time to Nordson's we go, for dinner at six; then to enjoy a fine show.

We do have a problem one we must face, to find a house for antiques; do you know of a place?

So let us get busy keep looking around; I'm sure that in Amherst one can be found.

But here's to our Society that we hold so dear; may you continue to prosper, year after year.

Unfortunately, the Historical Society poem was not dated. The few dated poems ranged from 1951 to 1979.

Etta Letteman, nee Ella Hoffner, was not originally from Amherst. Born in Elyria in 1893, she lived most of her early and adult years in Henrietta and Brownhelm before moving to Amherst in 1966. Her first residency was 450 Shupe Avenue residing next door to Amherst historian Valarie Jenkins; and later at age 90, relocating to Albright Terrace. She wrote many other poems, but the ones collected in "This and That" reflect her years in Henrietta, Brownhelm and later, Amherst. She passed on in 1986, at the age of 93, and is buried at the Brownhelm cemetery. Her booklet "This and That" is on display at the Quigley Museum.

Explorer's Club

The Amherst Historical Society was a sponsoring Explorer's station with the summer program developed by Main Street Amherst. Participating businesses and organizations have an activity for children to complete in order to receive an activity pin. The Amherst Historical Society provided a walking tour booklet for children who then drew a picture of a structure in the Sandstone Village or the Quigley Museum.



Garage Sales

Shopping continues every Saturday 9a-2p. Furniture, lamps, pictures, and other treasures are in the Long Barn, Pine Tree and Gallery.



THE CURIOUS CURATOR.....by Joan Rosenbusch



I have been tweaking our Quigley Family Tree for the last month or so as there is so much to offer regarding these early settlers. We know the basics of their lives and as I dig deeper, I find some great stories and quirks that I will document for the Historical Society. Thank you to Nancy Bliel, Jeff Sigsworth, and in memory, Orville Manes, for the information they have provided over the years.



As press time neared for this Grindstone story, we received a letter from Nancy Bliel, the paternal great-great grandniece of Joseph (1777-1873) & Mary Polk Quigley (1777-1860). They were the original owners of what is now known as the Quigley Museum. Nancy told us that her brother Tom English, from Seattle, Washington has an item he wants to donate to our museum. I was excited when I heard this and had no idea how magnificent this piece would be.

The pictures here show Mr. English's endowment to us... a beautiful cane with a stainless-steel top inscribed with George Washington Quigley's name.

George Washington Quigley was the son of Joseph and Mary Polk Quigley. He was raised in the building on the corner of Milan Avenue and Lake Street on land that was purchased from Jacob Shupe. His father, Joseph, as well as farming many acres, was involved in local government as a trustee and later became a judge in one of the early elections.

Quigley died February 19, 1907 and his obituary included this comment: "*George, in transacting his business in Amberst, came in contact with a majority of Lorain County people who found him upright and fair in all his dealings and his word was as good as his bond. His business affairs prospered as he owned several farms and took an active interest in farm work.*"



As we await the delivery of the cane, a very special place will be prepared at the museum to show it to our community. Tom English told us "He would like it to find a good home and they thought that the Quigley Museum would be the perfect place!"

Be sure to put a visit to the Quigley Museum on top of your "To-Do" list.

Remembering Vivienne Bickley

Republished from Grindstone July/August 2013

DO YOU REMEMBER?..... The Way We Shopped?

When the grocer was the owner of his own store and waited on customers from behind the counter?

When his store was simply a huge room surrounded by counters and shelves behind him almost to the ceiling. Some had tall ladders they could wheel to each section that held the merchandise.

When you dressed up and wore a hat and gloves to go shopping in “downtown” Lorain or Elyria? What a difference in a mall shoppers appearance now!

Remember the gadget that carried your sales slip and cash in a capsule by vacuum tube to the office upstairs where they returned it with your change? Do you know what the name of this clever system was? Tell me if you do.

Do you recall your first visit to the “supermarket”? Mine was not the thrill I had expected. The Big Bear store in Columbus was converted from a warehouse and was plain, badly lighted and had no interesting displays. The self-service won us over and, of course, the stores improved with competition. The Piggly Wiggly in Alabama was an improvement over Big Bear. But where did they get those names?

The street cars? During the depression, if my mother could scrape up the fare, which I believe was only a dime, we would ride into Lorain downtown on a street car which was a trolley car. She really couldn't afford to shop, so we did window shopping. She may have bought a ten-cent item from one of the “Five and Dime” stores, such as bobby or safety pins, cold cream, perfume (it was awful) rouge or bar soap. There was a Woolworth's, Kresge's, and Neisner's, which was actually a “dollar store”. We used to stop in at the seed store where a voice would call out “Hello Girls” when we walked in. The voice belonged to their huge colorful parrot who talked and danced in rhythm to “Yankee Doodle”. But the trolley ride was the best part of all!

Remember the lady who played the latest songs on the piano and sang without a mike in a dime store? She was selling the latest sheet music. I stood and listened to her (and learned all the lyrics) while my mother shopped.

Remember when Sears Roebucks' and Montgomery Ward sent free catalogs to everyone? Mail order shopping was quite popular then in the 30's and 40's. My uncle, only two years older than me, used to call the catalogs our “wishing books”. We played a game, seeing who could be first to slap our hands over an item and say “MINE!” How was it that he at about eight years and me at six could be happy just pretending ownership of items? Children of the Great Depression were easily made happy and used their imaginations more in self entertainment. I do believe such a childhood without material possessions was good for you.

Later came the malls with the May Co. Mall on Rte. 254 leading the way. We thought it was great until the bigger Midway Mall in Elyria was built. Then on and on came new ones like Great Northern for us to explore. Many people shop now on the internet from the comfort of their homes, but a person who really loves shopping heads for the malls...how shopping did change!

CHRISTMAS SALES

Saturdays, 9-2 Grange Hall



By My Lantern's Light



Do you want to hear a story? A scary story?
Some of Amherst's spirits (real or imaginary)
will share their stories 5-8pm Sat. Oct 22 and
Sunday Oct 23 at the Sandstone Village.

Admission \$5 per person. Children five and
under are free.

Cider and doughnuts will be served in the
Grange Hall

Reservations please by October 14



A Bit of Amherst History . . . By Martha Pallante



Over the recent months, many of the early Amherst establishments have been revisited through these pages; including the historical former Park Avenue Post Office constructed in 1939 with federal Treasury Department funds. Today the building is occupied by Main Street Amherst and houses a unique artifact from the 1940s. On the east wall of the entrance area is a colorful 4-1/8 feet high by 14 feet long oil on canvas mural titled “Pioneers Crossing the Ohio River.” This was a New Deal art work project.

The mural, funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Section of Painting and Sculpture, was one of the department’s three visual arts programs instituted during the great depression. They commissioned artists to create paintings and sculptures that would decorate new federal buildings. Commissioned to paint the Amherst mural was a young artist from New York City named Michael Loew.

The mural depicts a group of pioneers, a covered wagon, and an ox crowded together on a raft. Behind them is a body of water with hills in the background. From the rear, several men are using long poles to propel the raft forward, while in the front a young man is pulling on a rope with all of his strength to move the raft forward. Several women, one of whom is holding an infant, are grouped in the center next to the wagon, ox, a plow and yoke.



Michael Loew incorporated Ohio’s frontier history in his Amherst mural. While it is not apparent from the mural itself, he noted their ethnic identities and their search for freedom in his description: “Scores of families in search of new land came in their wagons from New England; Germans, Scotch-Irish and Quakers from Pennsylvania, and hosts of settlers from Virginia and Kentucky.”

Amherst Historical Society Archival Documents

Contained in the historical society files are copies of documents obtained from the National Archives pertaining to the mural. One item is a three-page letter dated Oct. 26, 1941 from artist Michael Loew to Edward Rowan, Chief, Section of Fine Arts, stating completion of the Amherst Mural and his displeasure over amount of payment. Loew asked that “...the new commission might exceed the amount to the extent it would compensate for wood, materials and the cost of installation. Naturally, I was extremely disappointed that the am’t would only exceed by \$50.”

Dated Nov.17, 1941 is a letter from Amherst Postmaster, E.C. Stiwald to Edward Rowan Assistant Chief, Public Buildings Administration. “The mural Mr. Michael Loew installed in the Amherst Post Office is a fine piece of art and is very satisfactory.”

The Amherst Historical Society

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The Amherst Historical Society

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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

THE DEATH OF DR. PEPPER

**A Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre
by Eileen Moushey**

Directed by Valerie Farschman

6 pm Sat Oct 8 and Sun Oct 9

**Dr Pepper, famed plastic surgeon, has
reached the top of his profession**

in Status and Money. He has one weakness—Women!

Reservations are required by October 1.

\$35 per person, \$30 per person for members.

