



The Amherst Historical Society Grindstone Newsletter

January / February 2023

AMHERST HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Amherst Historical Society Events

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

In 1972, a group of concerned Amherst citizens first discussed the need to form an organization which would be responsible to organize and manage historical records. The Amherst Library was overflowing with records and artifacts. Concern for the proper preservation of old Amherst Village records prompted those citizens to set the wheels in motion. Working together with Amherst City Council and The Amherst Library eventually resulted in the formation of



the Amherst Historical Society April 10, 1973. Stay tuned and follow our story as we proceed to celebrate AHS 50th Anniversary.



You are cordially invited to AHS Potluck Luncheon on Saturday, January 21, from 11:30am to 2pm for Volunteers, Members and Supporters of the Amherst Historical Society.

Reservations are Essential. Please refer to the list below to see what dish we are asking each of you to bring to share. We are asking that you bring your recipe along so we may share and inform guests who may have allergies. The main dish will be provided by AHS.

Contribution by last name:

A through E—vegetable side dish/casserole

F thru K—starch side dish/ casserole

L through R—dessert

S through Z—soup or salad

**Reservations Required by January 16 to 440-988-7255 or
office@amhersthistoricalsociety.org**

Amherst Community



The Amherst Office on Aging is looking for friendly people who can spare a few hours each week to deliver hot meals to Senior Citizens. Meals are delivered Monday through Friday between 10:30 and noon. Volunteers can choose a day that works best for them, or fill in as a substitute. Clients love meeting volunteers and knowing that someone cares about them. Call the Office on Aging Monday through Friday 440-988-2817 to learn more about connecting with seniors.



Amherst Schools award Crystal Apples to recognize volunteer contributions to schools. Two of those award winners, both with the Junior High PTO, are also volunteers with Amherst Historical Society. Congratulations, ladies!! Dawn Clappas went “above and beyond to support staff and students.” Elizabeth Fought has served as secretary of the group, and “been involved in supporting military families, recently helping AJHS earn Purple Heart School status.”

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

Dear Members and Friends,

Are you aware April 10, 2023 is the 50th Anniversary of The Amherst Historical Society? To commemorate this milestone occasion we are planning several events and opportunities allowing us to share our story with the community. Nothing happens here without the dedication of fantastic people. We have been truly blessed over the past 50 years with many generous volunteers and community supporters who have made the AHS and The Sandstone Village so very successful. Thank you for your dedication! Please let us know if there is a special person or memory that you would like to share. For the latest information follow us on our website www.amhersthistoricalsociety.org, Facebook and Instagram.

I'm excited to announce that Elizabeth Fought has joined our team as Administrative Assistant. She brings a wealth of energy, knowledge and experience to our staff. Elizabeth is a very active volunteer for numerous organizations and is passionate about history and community. A military spouse and mother of four, she is thrilled to be part of The Amherst Historical Society. She has stepped-up our media presence and continues to surprise us with her many talents.

2023 Board Updates: Khristal Kramer-Nutt has retired from the Board of Directors. We are grateful that she will continue to be involved as a volunteer. Mitch Witherell has moved to an advisory role and Jerry Torma has been awarded the position of Board Member Emeritus. Welcome to new Board members joining in 2023: Joe Fought, Jerry Gach and Brenda Phillips We are excited to add their talents to our very active Board of Directors

Aaron Baaske - President

Tony Melendez - Vice President

Brenda Phillips - Secretary

April Sawyer - Treasurer

Diane Camera, Joe Fought, Jerry Gach, Lori Melendez, Ryan Sawyer, Cathy Sekletar, John Sekletar and Gina Welch

Wishing you a Happy and Healthful New Year,
Sandy

Congratulations to our monthly winners:
January Carol Faragher - February John Schaeffer

Looking forward to 2023

Our calendar is filling up for 2023. These are some of events that we have confirmed, and are considering for 2023. We welcome your ideas or suggestions for events that contribute to our mission to empower and educate, because without the preservation of history and the past, there is no future.

EVENTS: Potluck Luncheon, Community Presentations, Super Bowl Party, "Egg"stravaganza, 50th Anniversary celebrations, Volunteer Appreciation Lunch, Historic President's Dinner, Tea Party for Ladies and Gentlemen, Car Show, Murder Mystery Dinner, By My Lanterns Light, and Light Up the Village.

MEMBERSHIP: To support these dynamic events, please renew your membership for 2023. Membership forms are available at the AHS office, or you can renew on the website www.amhersthistoricalsociety.org.

GARAGE SALES: We continue to need your donations for our garage sales. Sorry, but we cannot accept donations of fabric items (clothes, fabric toys, bedding), major appliances or electronics. If you have a special item of historical significance, please call the office to discuss donation options.

YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS: An important part of our grant application process is demonstrating community involvement. Be sure to let us know about the time you spend helping us. Every moment counts.

Thank you to our 150 volunteers for providing more than 6,000 hours to support AHS in 2022!!

Marie Robinson and Potato Dolls



Marie Robinson was a dedicated volunteer in the Amherst Community, including the Amherst Historical Society. She passed away September 22, 2022 at the age of 92. Her kindness and generosity will be missed by many. Marie had a way of lighting up any occasion with her energetic personality.

A life-long Amherst resident she and her husband, Harry, owned The Timbers which she took over at age 47 when her husband passed away. She was inducted into the Gallery of Success at Marion L. Steele High School.

Among her many contributions included

Women Helping Others club of Amherst and was voted “Woman of the Year” in 1997. Her eight children were inspired by her motto “It is better to give than receive.” She was a 50-year member of the Amherst Democratic Women’s Club, and a former board member of Amherst Chamber of Commerce.

Her most visible contribution to Amherst may be her Potato Pal Doll. The Amherst Historical Society owns some of her dolls which were donated. Marie introduced the “Original Potato Pal Doll” at the first Potato Festival in Amherst in 1984. Along with Sue Sexton and Pam Simons, they made 75 dolls which were sold before the festival began. The total 1984 doll orders exceeded 300.

Her idea was born with the first Potato Pal Doll, Maria, and quickly followed with the “birth” of twins – Sweet Potato and Potato Chip. The popularity grew quickly as Marie was interviewed on local TV programs and rode with the dolls in parades.

The dolls were each hand made and arrived with a birth certificate. The owner of the doll could choose its name and have it recorded with Marie. Each doll evolved from raw materials such as nylon and fabric remnants.

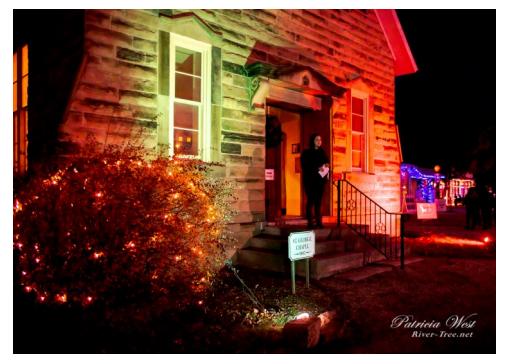
With the sewing wizardry of the partners each doll took 11-12 hours to produce. The official copyright for the dolls included MSP, the initials of Marie, Sue and Pam.



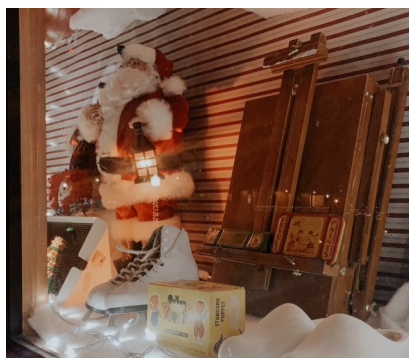
Sadly, the original doll, Maria, was “dollnapped” at the 1984 festival. A reward flyer was created with a \$50 reward posted for the return, but the doll was never found.

Each year a new edition of dolls was introduced at the Amherst potato festival, held the third weekend in August. The festival had a 10-year history beginning in 1984, with the last event held August, 1994.

Light Up The Village 2022 brought hundreds of people to tour The Sandstone Village. A heartfelt thank you to the volunteers who beautifully decorated and hosted this delightful event. Thank you to our photographers Brandi Drexler, Elizabeth Fought, Deanna Houston, Patricia West and Stan Whitten.



Thank you to the Greater Lorain Young Marines, who provided cocoa and doughnuts, and to Marion L. Steele students who were greeters and docents for the event!



Remembering Vivienne Bickley

Reprinted from September 2014

DO YOU REMEMBER?..... What Price Beauty?

“You have to suffer to be beautiful.” My mom quoted this saying to me as she untangled my hair with a WIRE brush. I still believe the brush was meant for currying horses’ manes. (The promised beauty-- she lied!) Woman have always been willing to pay the price for beauty. Think back to the corsets so uncomfortable in the 1800’s and even the Playtex rubber girdle of the 50’s. Many of us know what it is to starve to lose weight and with that method the weight always comes back. We know that many women suffered breast cancer when implants not of surgical quality were used. Skin cancer is still caused by the desire to be tan and even tanning beds have been proven not to be safe after all. Facial cosmetic surgery is said to be very painful, but is endured by many - -- almost a necessity for movie actors and actresses. (Mom your adage holds true in these cases.)

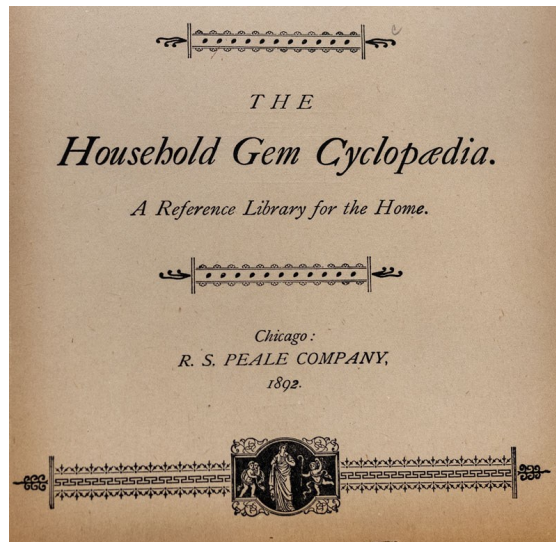
Throughout my childhood, most of it during the Great Depression, I watched in awe as my mother and her sister tried home beauty treatments. They made cloth packets filled with oatmeal, water soaked them and applied the “goo” to their faces. Dried, then rinsed, they seemed quite satisfied with their inexpensive facials. Shampooing hair with bar soap, they sometimes rinsed with vinegar, or beer or whatever else they had heard was beautifying. They set their hair with bobby pins and what they called “gooey”. It was cheap, sometimes blue and other times green. I later learned it was gelatin. A “natural blonde” I worked with in the 50’s did admit to using lemon juice as a rinse. When I asked how many for each rinse, her answer was “Six.” Natural? MEOW!

Cleopatra did it when she was very young, why couldn’t I? Mom said “No” to my eye makeup in my teens. Cleo wore kohl to accentuate her eyes and it was as black as “coal.” No wonder Mark and Julius were so smitten. I had to content myself with Vaseline on my eyelashes, which sometimes blurred the vision.

Turning 14, I was finally allowed to wear only TANGEL lipstick. Pale peach in the cardboard tube, it turned pink on the lips. Do I remember correctly- - - was it priced at only ten cents? I know that HEATHER rouge was only a dime at my counter in Scotts Dime Store in Lorain where I started my working days at age 14. I had an assignment in high school to research products and found that this rouge in its cardboard compact was rated the highest of all rouges priced much higher. Mom and her friends and sisters all swore by cold cream. Sold in huge jars, only lightly scented and at a very low price, they used it to remove makeup and to “moisturize.” I never heard that word until I became an adult and hundreds of products used it in ads. My grandmother, who had come from Europe in the late 1800’s, thought makeup was sinful, but she did apply Vaseline to her face. After 12 children and farming in the sun, she had few wrinkles in her later years. Cosmetic firms sell expensive moisturizers, but I know a secret: Keep your face damp after washing with soap (of all things) and apply any kind of oil or cream to lock in the moisture. Vaseline, hand crème, even salad oil would work. I use a very good, but inexpensive body moisturizer on my face.

Now what should I do with all the money I save? I know - - -false eyelashes! Saving money doesn’t always work. I knew a man who loved to soak in his wife’s supply of bubble bath. When she was gone one day, he found she was out of it. It wasn’t economy he had in mind, only the need for a replacement. He filled the tub with luxuriant suds of clothes washing detergent! He soaked and soaked, then peeled and peeled for a whole week. Can one still buy bath salts? Women found them to be drying to their skin so bath oils and after bathing body moisturizers replaced them.

I once wrote a poem that could have been called “Ode to Moisturizers.” The last two lines were, “ You know that old lady in the red brick house? She dried up and blew away!” Obviously didn’t use them.



The Household Gem Cyclopedia by . . . Martha Pallante

Treasures are dropped off daily at the long barn in The Village, as well as, our Historical Society Office. This is the case of the rare book that found its way into the hands of our historical society office manager, Deanna Houston. Deanna acquired it from a family member who discovered it nestled away in the rafters of an old barn, which he purchased at an auction in South Amherst.

Surprisingly, the book is in relatively good condition. The hard cover and binding show considerable age-related wear, but most pages remain clean and legible.

Unfortunately, we have no history of how the book found its way high among the rafters, or why it was permanently stored in such a manner. But we were able to recover some history of the book, titled The Household Gem Cyclopedia and it's author, Fanny Lemira Gillette.

Published in 1881, the Household Gem Cyclopedia was a 747-page guide to housekeeping and general knowledge; often referred to as a Reference Library for the home. The book begins with 60 pages of exceptional reading regarding Physiology and Medicine, including extensive illustrations of the human body. A lengthy chapter on etiquette in the home is followed by a dictionary of facts, figures, poetry, mythology and foreign phrases.

Included in the rules of etiquette are these directives: "All affectations of foreign accent, mannerisms, exaggerations and slang are detestable. Next to unexceptionable grammar, correct elocution, and a frank, easy bearing, it is necessary to be genial. If you cannot be animated, sympathetic and cheerful, do not go into society."

The final section, merely labeled Cookery Department, contains more than 500 pages of recipes and "facts worth knowing" for the home makers of the era. The final chapters "Preparations for the Sick" and "Toilet Recipes and Items" complete the housekeeping and general knowledge sections.

Fanny Lemira Gillette was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1828. She began her writing career at the age of 60 when she wrote her first of many White House Cookbooks in 1887. In 1881 she published The Household Gem Cyclopedia. She died in 1926 at the impressive age of 99.

The Amherst Historical Society

113 South Lake St.
Amherst, OH 44001
Phone: 440-988-7255

Email: office@amhersthistoricalsociety.org

Website: www.amhersthistoricalsociety.org

The Amherst Historical Society Board of Directors

Aaron Baaske - President

Tony Melendez - Vice President

Brenda Phillips - Secretary

April Sawyer - Treasurer

Diane Camera Joe Fought Jerry Gach

Lori Melendez Ryan Sawyer Cathy Sekletar

John Sekletar Gina Welch Jerry Torma, Emeritus

Executive Director—Sandy Kaiser

Office Manager—Deanna Houston

Administrative Assistant—Elizabeth Fought

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

Grindstone Printed by SQP Print Center

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Other Items of Interest

February 23, 7 pm at Amherst Historical Society Sandstone Hall

Matt Nahorn will present

Residents of the Historic Shupe Homestead & the Mystery of Oak Point

Please join us as Local Historian Matt Nahorn shares the story of those families who called the Shupe Homestead home their own. Learn of a unique connection to the mysterious plans for the land at nearby Oak Point. Matt will also share some tips on how to research your home and property. The program is free to the public and light refreshments will be served. Please call AHS 440-988-7255 to reserve your seat.



DONATE HOLIDAY DÉCOR: As you pack your holiday decorations, please donate unneeded items to AHS. Lighting the Village provides a marvelous and brilliant holiday display for everyone to enjoy. We always are in need of more decorations for next year. Please and thank you.

SEWING WITH FRIENDS: Thursdays 9am-4:30pm a group of quilters come to The Sandstone Hall bringing their projects to work on and enjoy the company of people who love sewing. Other sewing crafts are also welcome to participate. There is a small fee each time you attend.

For more information please call; Terri 440-506-3101 or Tammy 440-731-9939.