

Log by Log

**Beavercreek
Historical Society**



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A Big Decision and a Big Move *Submitted by Jill Kincer*

As many of you know, since 2008 the Beavercreek Historical Society has had an agreement with Beavercreek Township to occupy and use the 1826 Jacob Coy House, owned by the Township, as our headquarters. For our organization, moving into the Coy House was a major growth opportunity, as it marked the first time since our founding in 1985 that we had a central location to store many records which had formerly been kept in various basements and attics of our members. It allowed us to have space to offer opportunities for people interested in researching the past through various collections and old local history books maintained by our archivists. We have also held our Board of Trustee meetings there. Many of you donated time, funds and items in order to make the Coy House a place we could be proud to call our first headquarters.

Fast forward to late summer 2015, when we were first approached by Beavercreek Township officials inquiring if we might be interested in making use of space in the former Township Center, built in the early 1980s, located at 1981 Dayton-Xenia Road. It, like the Coy House, is located in the eastern portion of the township and sits on the south side of Dayton-Xenia Road directly across from Beaver United Church of Christ. The building became available when the Township in the past year consolidated all of its offices into the new Township Administration Building on the corner of Dayton-Xenia and Orchard Lane.

The offer was intriguing, and the Board of Trustees felt it was worth checking out. We scheduled a tour, talked with officials from the Township and sat down to make a big decision. We could 1) continue to occupy the Coy House and add the additional space, 2) pass up the new space, or 3) give up the Coy House and move everything to the new space. The Board considered the many pros and cons of each option and voted unanimously that we would vacate the Coy House and move our headquarters to the newly offered space. As the established user fees for each location are based on energy use, our new fees will now be lower than what we were paying to use the Coy House. The facility is totally handicapped accessible, has easy access located on a major road, has a security system, all-year on-going climate control, modern restrooms, excellent interior lighting, additional square footage and more. **Article continued on page 2.**



Continued from page 1. Many of you will ask the same question that we asked: what will become of the beloved Coy House, the home of one of Beaver Creek's founding families? We were assured by the Township Administrator that when the Township accepted the donation of the Coy House, they promised all due diligence to maintain and preserve the home for future generations, and that promise holds.

Many of our historic items collected from the 19th century are displayed at Wartinger Park which fits with that historical time frame—the early settlement of Beaver Creek. Now, with additional square footage, more wall space, etc., we will have space to begin to gather and display historic items from the 20th century which do not fit the Wartinger Park time frame. We will be able to focus here on the stories and items of the more recent times when Beaver Creek grew from a farming community to a suburb to the largest city in Greene County.

The Township Center, dedicated in 1982, originally had a large meeting room where the Trustees and other Township boards held public hearings, etc. Over the years, that meeting room was divided into several separate rooms and remains divided today. Thus, we will not have space there for large meetings and will continue to hold our Quarterly Meetings at Peace Lutheran.

Bob Wagley and Donna Lawson volunteered to co-chair a Moving Committee, and were joined by Lorraine Wagley, Denny Jarvi, Bob Bader, and Wendy and Bob Kirchoff. The move was accomplished just prior to Thanksgiving, following lots of sifting, packing, and cleaning. Thanks to that crew for all their planning and just plain hard work. It is appreciated!



We'll be taking suggestions as to what to name our new location. It was originally known as the Township Center but that is no longer appropriate. If you have ideas, feel free to let a Board Member know, drop us a line or an email (bhsohio@gmail.com). We encourage you to become involved with us as we continue to grow and as we continue to preserve Beaver Creek's past for the future.

1. *New location looking east on Dayton-Xenia Road (pg.1)*
2. *Movers unload our many prized possessions (pg.2)*
3. *Thanks to all who packed and unpacked (pg.2)*



Growing Up in the Nicodemus House

Submitted by Jeanne Wensits

Kathy Wemmer Ward didn't know it was a special house, one of Beavercreek's historic treasures. How could she know? To her it looked a good bit like other Beavercreek houses in the 1950's. What she didn't know was that this very house, where she had spent the first seven years of her life, had begun its existence in 1811 as a humble, rustic log cabin practically in the wilderness. Neither did she know until the 1970's, when her first home was starting to be demolished and the outer wall coverings were being stripped away, that Surprise! a little log cabin was slumbering underneath. In 1979, after being carefully dismantled and reconstructed in Wartinger Park by the Flower Trail Garden Club, the cabin became known as the Nicodemus House. There it sits proudly for all of us to explore and imagine its frontier life.

The cabin's story began when John Nicodemus acquired 900 acres of land deeded by the US government during James Madison's 1809 presidency. He built the cabin in the vicinity of what was once the intersection of Grange Hall and New Germany-Trebein Roads. Following major road construction, that site location is now officially at Germany Lane and Wynkoop Court, lying north of I-675. Over the years the cabin morphed into a much larger house as the log cabin was swallowed up and covered with siding. Around 1920 Max Zink purchased the house and it later became rental property.

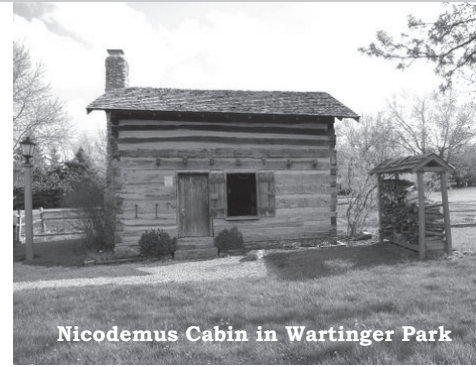
Kathy's parents, Guy and Myrtle Wemmer, rented the property from 1942 to 1957. Kathy recalls that the rent for the house and about 6 acres was \$15 a month. She was born in 1950 and shared the house with her parents and two older siblings.

To Kathy, the house that she grew up in was very large. Little did she know that her "huge" living room was the whole main floor of the log cabin. Come Christmas it comfortably accommodated two sofas, tables, chairs, a Christmas tree, and happy family gatherings. (That's Kathy on her sister's lap and Kathy's doll in the stroller in the 1953 picture). The walls no longer featured rough, brown logs but brightly-colored wallpaper and the floor now had pretty floral carpeting.

Built onto the left side of the living room was her parents' bedroom; the kitchen had been added onto the back side of the house. Between the living room and the bedroom, stairs led up to a large bedroom that boasted three twin beds, three dressers and a slanted ceiling one had to avoid bonking ones head on. The log cabin's original dirt-floored cellar underneath the living room was where Kathy's mother stored her canned goods and where spiders and creepy-crawly things lurked. Kathy was not keen on going down there.

Standing out behind the house a big barn watched over grazing cows and open spaces. Of course there was no Sonic Drive-in or Suburban Extended Stay Hotel a stone's throw away then and definitely no Wright State University further down the street.

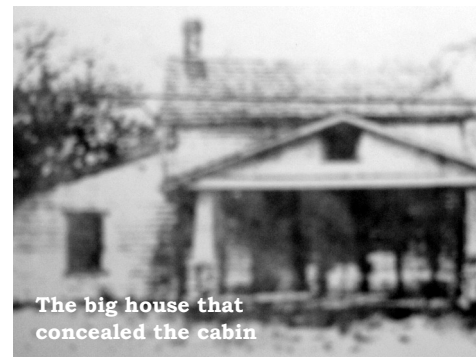
Kathy and her parents moved out in 1957 and her brother and sister remained as tenants, so the family was still able to gather there. Later on, after all the Wemmers had moved on, a family with eleven children called it home. Eventually the house deteriorated and was condemned by the Board of Health. But alas, as we know, during the demolition process the old log cabin had the last laugh and received a new lease on life when it was relocated in lovely Wartinger Park within a growing community of fellow pioneer buildings.



Nicodemus Cabin in Wartinger Park



Kathy's family enjoying Christmas in the big house



The big house that concealed the cabin

Zimmerman Descendants Enriched Heritage Day Celebration

When the Beaver Creek Historical Society first contacted descendants of Beaver Creek's first physician Dr. George Zimmerman to see if they were interested in participating with us to honor their ancestor, there was no hesitation on their part. Joe Zimmerman, a resident of Alpharetta, GA and long-time BHS member, stepped up to actively lead the involvement, assisted along the way by many other members of this extended family.

The family put together a marvelous display of old family artifacts, with the highlight being old original leather-bound ledger books from both the Shoup-Zimmerman Mill and Zimmerman store dating back to 1832 through 1863. It was amazing to look at the lovely script handwriting and read the details of what was purchased at each of these local establishments so many years ago. The ledgers have been lovingly preserved and passed down through the family, now in the possession of Harvey Zimmerman, who is the Mayor of Christiansburg, OH and was in attendance that day. Joe Zimmerman put together a large story board highlighting the history of the Zimmerman family for whom the early settlement called Zimmerman was named which was located at the crossroads of Dayton-Xenia and North Fairfield Road.

Other display items included a carriage horse weight, an antique bed warmer which had belonged to George Zimmerman's wife, Nancy Durnbaugh Zimmerman, and numerous other interesting items, books and artifacts.

Third great grandsons of Dr. Zimmerman entertained the assembled guests with David Couser playing the harmonica and brother Mark playing his saw, much to the amazement of the students from Jacob Coy Middle School show choir who joined the event to sing America the Beautiful. Linda Zimmerman spoke for the family in accepting the official proclamation declared by Mayor Brian Jarvis of the City of Beaver Creek and Beaver Creek Township Trustee, Carol Graff. Please be certain to read that Proclamation on the next page (5) of this newsletter.

We sincerely thank the Zimmerman Family for their contributions that enabled us to have a greater sense of appreciation for our past, and for taking such good care to preserve it for the future.

January 26 Quarterly meeting Presenter Brett Williford is a REALTOR®/Manager of Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate at 3944 Indian Ripple Road. A History Minor at Wright State University, his love of the past and interpretation of how it carries forward have combined into a passion for our Beaver Creek home.

Brett credits his passion for Beaver Creek to numerous cover-to-cover readings of the Historical Society's Beaver Creek Chronicles and DOZENS of cups of coffee with longtime local residents and settler descendants. If you'd like to share your stories with Brett for inclusion in the Beaver Creek Heritage Trail, please contact him at 937-985-3223. Every story matters! "If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree." - Michael Crichton.

Brett also serves as the Board of Trustees Chairperson for CHOICES, Inc. Foster Care (www.choicesfostercare.com) which focuses on Foster Care, Treatment Foster Care, Youth Independent Living and Home-Based Services. He's also a past-President of the Beaver Creek Youth Hockey Association (www.creekhockey.com), supporting local youth ice hockey and the Beaver Creek High School Varsity Hockey Team.



PROCLAMATION

Whereas Dr. George Zimmerman, born in 1779 and died in 1818, was not only one of the early settlers of Beavercreek Township, but was also one of Beavercreek's early doctors. His children and descendants continued to live in the area and also contributed to the growth and progress of Beavercreek, and through this proclamation we also honor them.

In 1805, Dr. George Zimmerman with his wife Nancy Durnbaugh Zimmerman traveled from Maryland to Beavercreek Township and settled on what was then called the Big Road to Dayton, now Dayton-Xenia Road. The original Zimmerman home site is located on the south side of Dayton-Xenia just to the east of the current Beavercreek Township Fire Station Number Two. The home still stands today, now with white siding and probable additions, amid open fields. It was there that George and Nancy raised two sons and four daughters.

During the construction of their log cabin family home, the Zimmermans resided with Nancy's sister Francis and her husband Philip Harshman at their home built around 1804 on what is now North Fairfield Road. This is the same Harshman House that is preserved at Wartinger Park in Beavercreek.

Dr. Zimmerman died at age 39 in 1818 and is buried in a tiny fenced cemetery tucked in behind the Fire Station on Dayton-Xenia Road on the original home site. His wife Nancy died in 1861 at the age of 79, and is buried in that same cemetery along with Philip Harshman and a few others.

History shows that Dr. Zimmerman was a kind and busy man, as his estate paperwork filed after his death showed 152 open unpaid accounts from the local citizenry for his services which totaled \$662.43 and three/fourths cents. The highest amount owed him was \$41.75 by Widow Haney, and the lowest amount shown was 12 and one/half cents owed by Jasper DeVilbiss.

In 1830, Jacob Zimmerman, the second son of George and Nancy, married Mary Shoup who was the daughter of Solomon Shoup who had built the first flour mill along the Little Beaver Creek in 1805. Following his marriage, Jacob was involved at the mill for many years until his death in 1867.

Jacob and Mary settled on the southeast corner of Dayton-Xenia Road and North Fairfield Road where they opened a store. In 1843, he donated a parcel of land on an opposite side of that intersection to build the first house of worship, and the settlement grew up in that area that took the name Zimmerman. This area continued to be known Zimmerman for many years.

Be it therefore declared that this day, September 19, 2015, in the City and Township of Beavercreek, Ohio at the Heritage Day Festival sponsored by the Beavercreek Historical Society shall be proclaimed ***Dr. George Zimmerman Day.***

Thank You

Bob Zimmer faithfully served as the Facility Coordinator at the Coy House and has decided he will officially retire from that position as our organization transitions to our new location. We thank him for his many efforts taking care of that facility during the seven years the Society occupied that location. Bob has been a driving force of energy within the Society for many years, including his work at the Coy House, and we thank him for all the many things he has done and continues to do.

Helen Haun is sent a big thank you for all of her hard work as Chairperson of the Harvest Dinner fundraising event again this year. It was enjoyed by all who attended—great food, great company and great setting. Approximately \$1900 was raised for the Society. This event takes many volunteers, and we thank everyone who helped out in any way. Helen has done a terrific job of organizing these dinners for four years in a row at Wartinger Park. Thanks, Helen.

Joe Zimmerman completed a required number of volunteer hours on behalf of BHS that fulfilled an agreement by his employer, Verizon, to donate \$750 to an employee's chosen non-profit. Joe spent many hours helping arrange for his family's participation in our Heritage Day celebration in September, creating displays, etc., and thus earned the monetary award. Thank you to Joe for his good efforts and to Verizon for encouraging volunteer participation in communities.

Open Opportunities

Needed: Facility Coordinator for our new headquarters location at the (previous) Township Center Building, 1981 Dayton-Xenia Road. Our agreement with Beavercreek Township for the new location requires us to “be responsible for all cleaning, janitorial services and interior maintenance of the space.” We expect only light housekeeping and perhaps changing a light bulb or so to be involved. Thus we seek someone who would be willing to facilitate those responsibilities. If you may be interested or have questions, call Bob Wagley at 429-8325.

Needed: Harvest Dinner Chairperson to organize fireside dinners at Wartinger Park in October of 2016. Helen Haun (see note above) is declining to serve in this position again, but has put together very detailed notes and is willing to share ideas and tips for an incoming chairperson. New ideas for this event or something similar are also always welcomed. Call Bob Wagley at 429-8325 if you are interested, have ideas or questions.

Have an article you want in the Log by Log? Deadline for submissions into the next issue is March 18.

We're always looking for volunteers! To inquire about available opportunities, email BHSOhio@gmail.com.

2016 to Bring Exciting New Events

We are pleased to announce exciting spring and summer events coming to Wartinger Park in 2016. Mark your calendars, save the dates now—you won't want to miss these! The events will be free and donations will be welcomed.

Daffodil Show and Open House

Saturday, April 30, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Sunday, May 1, Noon – 4 p.m.

The Southwest Ohio Daffodil Society (SWODS) will be bringing its 2016 Annual Daffodil Show to Wartinger Park in a joint program with our Beavercreek Historical Society. SWODS has been presenting an annual show for 46 years. It has held the event in various locations across southwestern Ohio including the Cincinnati Zoo and Wegerzyn Garden Center. They are excited—and so is the Beavercreek Historical Society—that this year their many beautiful daffodils, after judging, will be on display at the barn in Wartinger Park right here in the heart of Beavercreek. BHS will open the log homes for tours on both days to complement the event and offer an opportunity to share the history and insides of these homes with the visiting public on those two days. Look for more details in the Spring Log by Log.



Black Hoof, Primary Chief of the Shawnees, to Visit

Saturday, June 25, in Beavercreek – Wartinger Park barn at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 26, in Xenia – 74 West Church Street at 2:00 p.m.

As part of the celebration of the second annual Greene County History Week, the Beavercreek Historical Society and the Greene County Historical Society are excited to announce the groups will collaborate to bring William “Rusty” Cottrel, an area actor and presenter, appearing as Black Hoof, the Primary Chief of the Shawnees. Black Hoof, who lived over a century dying in 1831, was witness to and participant in many pivotal events that determined the direction of the old Northwest Territory, and in turn, that of the fledgling United States of America. As many of you knowledgeable of the Shawnee tribe know, they had a major village right here in Greene County, just north of Xenia at the current location of Old Town. More information will be coming in our Spring newsletter, but for now, save the date.

Renewal for 2016

Zelma Robinson, our Membership Chairperson, reminds everyone that it is time to send in your dues for 2016. Inside this newsletter, you will find a colorful enclosure we ask that you please fill out and return with your check as soon as possible. We value your membership and ask for your continued support.

Beavercreek Historical Society

Renew now for 2016

Annual memberships begin January 1 and expire December 31. The expiration date of your membership appears in the corner of the label on your newsletter. If your current newsletter label reads *Exp 12-31-2015* please renew now. We thank you.

Annual Memberships	Lifetime Memberships
() \$15 Individual	() \$500-\$999- Preservationist
() \$20 Family	() \$1000 and above -Historian
() \$50 Club/Organization	

Contributions added to dues are tax deductible.

Please send your check and this form to:

Beavercreek Historical Society
1368 Research Park Drive
Beavercreek, OH 45432

Name: _____

Additional tax-deductible contribution: _____

Upcoming Events:

Quarterly Meeting, January 26

Brett Williford presenting Beaver Creek Heritage Trail; Peace Lutheran Church, 3530 Dayton-Xenia Rd. - 7:00 p.m.

***Board Meeting, February 7**

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. - 6:30 p.m.

***Board Meeting, March 10**

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. - 6:30 p.m.

Newsletter Article Submission Deadline

March 18 - 5:00 p.m.; E-mail submissions to the editor at b.joh88@gmail.com

***Board Meeting, April 7**

1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd. - 6:30 p.m.

**Please note the change in locations for monthly Board Meetings from the Coy House to 1981 Dayton-Xenia Rd.*



1368 Research Park Drive
Beaver Creek, Ohio 45432

"The objectives of the organization are to preserve structures of historical significance, to develop and present community education programs, and to create a learning center for historic education."

Beaver Creek Historical Society Quarterly Meeting

January 26, 2016 | 7:00 P.M. | Peace Lutheran Church | 3530 Dayton-Xenia Rd.

A Walk Down the Virtual Trail

As you recover from the holiday season, join us on the Beaver Creek Heritage Trail for our January 26th, 2016 Quarterly Meeting.

Brett Williford, of www.BeaverCreeksFinest.com, will host an evening of exploration and memories as we virtually criss-cross the city and township. Learn how Beaver Creek's history has touched the development of surrounding cities, counties, the State of Ohio and beyond! Enjoy stories of perseverance, folklore, hauntings and even some urban legends during this interactive presentation.

As featured in the Winter 2015 Log by Log, this is the PERFECT cure for the winter doldrums as we'll demonstrate how you can tour Beaver Creek's wonderful historical sites and meet the characters of our past from the comfort of your home! Enjoy hundreds of pictures, newspaper articles, stories and old maps—and everyone is invited to share their memories, both at the presentation and on the Tour itself.

Brett is a history buff by nature and operates the Beaver Creek Historical Society's Facebook Page. We're sure to have a great time and learn something about our home town!

